THE TRIUMPH OF BENEVOLENCE;

OR, THE HISTORY OF FRANCIS WILLS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE

TRIUMPH of BENEVOLENCE.

CHAPTER I.

In which the reader, according to Arthur Murphy *Eſquire's opinion, delivered in the firſt number of his Gray's Inn Journal, will be much embarraſſed, and ſuffer greatly from his natural diffidence, upon being introduced to ſome perſons to whom he is, as yet, an entire ſtranger: but if he is well bred, and accuſtomed to ſee company, this remark will be deemed abſurd.*

IT was about the latter end of the month of Auguſt, and about eight o'clock in the evening, before the day was entirely cloſed, when three travellers arrived, on foot, at an obſcure inn on the great

great northern road, about nineteen miles from London. They ſeemed to ſtand in need of ſome refreſhment, for they were thoroughly wetted with the rain which then poured down inceſſantly, and had continued to do ſo all the afternoon. The landlady, a compaſſionate woman and a widow, pitied their diſtreſs, and aſſiſted in relieving it. More logs were added to the fire; and, as their habiliments beſpoke them ſomewhat ſuperior to her common run of cuſtomers, ſhe attended them with a double ſhare of diligence. Their cloaths were hung to dry, and the good woman ſet about preparing ſome hot for them with great alacrity. But leſt my reader ſhould be unacquainted with the beverage they were to partake of, it is neceſſary to inform him, that it is compoſed of ale made hot, with an egg beaten up in it, to which a certain quantity of brandy and ſugar is added. This was the moſt comfortable regale the houſe could afford, and eſteemed the

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the moſt eligible in their preſent ſituation. This potation reſtored warmth to their frigid limbs, and ſpirits to their bodies, almoſt exhauſted with fatigue. Their cloaths began to dry, and they aſſumed their former gaiety. The outer room of this inn, though we know not how to diſtinguiſh it, yet are conſcious it had a ſign which time has buried in oblivion, was filled with harveſt labourers, whom the ſeverity of the tempeſt had driven from the field, and who were enjoying, in the interval of labour, all the merriment that ſociety could partake or impart. Loud burſts of laughter ſhook the room, and ſongs, univerſally choruſſed, diſpelled the gloom that would have otherwiſe ſurrounded them from their reflections on the badneſs of the weather: and, in this exerciſe, they were aſſiſted by ſome potent home-brewed, that baniſhed all conſideration in proportion to the quantity imbibed.

Into the *penetralia*, or more inward receſſes of this hoſpitable manſion, and by far the moſt comfortable, viz. the kitchen, two boys, labourers at a neighbouring brick-kiln, were admitted: for their fire was extinguiſhed by the rain, and they were glad to fly for ſhelter and refreſhment to the ſmaller, but more kindly, hearth of our landlady, whoſe humanity we are happy in having an opportunity to celebrate, and hand down to poſterity. And in the courſe of this delectable hiſtory, we ſhall ever pay the greateſt reſpect to virtue and merit, though we ſhould meet them either in obſcurity or diſtreſs; and treat ignorance, her companion inſolence, and villainy, though in ever ſuch exalted ſtations, with all that *hauteur* and contempt they deſerve. A certain ſign that the author is poor, and has always kept very low company.

The converſation of the two boys, who were placed on the oppoſite ſide of the fire from our travellers, ſerved to diſſipate their chagrin,

chagrin, and amuſe them, until they were properly cloathed again. As they ſeemed unable to purchaſe a pot of the cheering liquor themſelves, Mr. Wills, (for ſo I ſhall diſtinguiſh one of the ſtrangers with whom our readers may hereafter become better acquainted, provided they have patience to travel through this tireſome work) deſired the landlady to ſupply them with a pot, which requeſt, with a great deal of good nature, ſhe immediately obeyed. For ſuch was the humility of our hoſteſs, that ſhe waited with as much alacrity on the poor as on the rich; wiſely arguing, that the money ſhe received from a cottager was equal in value to a like ſum, though paid by a firſt lord of the treaſury. And herein ſhe differed and diſſented from thoſe inn-keepers on the great weſtern road, who think no money ſo good or ſo valuable as that which is ſpent by the nobility. And of the like opinion are the keepers of thoſe very reſpectable houſes, *Almack's*, *the*

Thatch'd Houſe, *Boodle's*, and the more celebrated receptacle for the moſt honourable inſtitution this iſland ever boaſted, called, *The Coterié*, and which we hope may laſt, like the empire of the Medes and Perſians, for ever. The boys ſoon became a little elevated by the liquor which the good woman, more from the reflection on the wetneſs of the night, than the perſon who was to pay for it, made very ſtrong and rich; and ſo much was ſhe pleaſed with her company, that ſhe drank heartily and often of her own brewage, which ſhe ever and anon, and with great juſtice, praiſed exceedingly. They began to talk of their own affairs, quite regardleſs of the perſons who were preſent. "Well, Jack," ſaid one of them, "one does not know where "one may meet a friend: you ſee, maſter "there gave us a pot, when we could not "afford to get one ourſelves."

"Why, Tom," ſaid the other, "you "can afford it very well; what do you ſay "ſo for?" "No,

"No, I cannot," replied Tom, "for "master has not paid me any wages these "three weeks, and I am glad to live as I "can."

"Not pay your wages! Sure master is a "plaguy rich man, and does not want "money; why doesn't he pay you then?"

"Why, mother has a cottage from him "that lies at the other side of the common "there, and is to give two guineas a year "rent for it; now, she has been three "quarters and above in it, without paying, "and so master would not let her stay any "longer, and threatened to turn her out; "and then sister Bett and Bill must have "begged: so he told mother that he "took me out of charity to work with "him, and she cried and took on; so I "heard it, and went next day to master, "and told him I'd work with him for no-"thing till the rent was paid, and not "turn mother out; and so he agreed: and "in three weeks more I shall clear it,

" and then ſhe may live there ſtill. And " we have been very unfortunate, for " a fitchew kill'd us ſeven young geeſe in " one night, that wou'd have help'd to " pay the rent, and the ſquire's dog killed " four ducks, and broke a parcel of eggs " where the old one was ſitting; ſo poor " mother cou'd not help it; but I ought " to do what I can, and tho' I mayn't have " my belly full ſo often as I uſed, what " ſignifies that? — I ſhan't be a bit the " worſe man—ſo—Here's to you, Jack.— " Maſter, your health".

CHAPTER II.

In which WILLS *behaves, in the opinion of many people, very fooliſhly.*

NOT a word of this converſation was loſt upon Wills, who liſtened to it very attentively, though the remains of a cold baked ſhoulder of mutton, which originally

ginally weighed about fourteen pounds, and was then reduced to ten, was laid before him, together with ſome bacon and eggs; and though the latter were very excellent, he has been often heard to declare the bacon was not fit to be eaten, for it ſtunk, and was ruſty. His companions indulged their appetites; but his curioſity at the beginning of this relation, and his indignation againſt the oppreſſive landlord at the concluſion of it, prevented his partaking the repaſt which was ſo agreeably and haſtily devoured by his companions, whoſe ſtomachs were not to be ſatisfied ſo eaſily. "Pray, my lad," ſaid Wills, "is "this maſter of yours a rich man?"

"Oh lord, Sir, I wiſh you was half as "rich; tho' mayhap you may, as you be "a Londoner. He has a matter of forty "men at work every day in the year, and "has a great mort of land here all about. "Your ſervant, Sir, I wiſh you a good "night, and thank you kindly."

"Are you going home?"

"Yes, maſter, I am; for the rain won't "give over this night, I believe; ſo your "ſervant, maſter, thank ye."

Wills haſtened out after him, and ſtopping the boy when he had got near the door, aſked him, what he was to have for ſupper at home that night?

"Nothing, maſter; I am uſed to go to "bed without a ſupper."

"And I," ſaid Wills, turning haſtily from him, "that never had it in my power "to relieve the diſtreſſes of my parents, "have a good ſupper every night. How "much worthier is he than me! Stay "there till I come to you again, Tom."

By this time his friends had finiſhed their ſuppers, and prevented his aſking the unneceſſary queſtion if they had eaten ſufficiently. His care then was, by ſeveral perſuaſive arguments, to prevail on the kind-hearted hoſteſs to part with the remains of the ſhoulder of mutton. When he

he declared his want of it, "What, all "Sir?"

"Yes, faith, I want it all; and wiſh "there was more of it."

"Indeed we have nothing elſe in the "houſe for dinner to-morrow, and there "is no poſſibility of getting any thing till "the day after; and what muſt we do "ourſelves?"

"I do not know," replied Wills, "but "I believe you can get a ſhoulder of mut-"ton ſooner than the poor people I am "going to ſend this to."

Humane and good-natured as our land-lady was, this argument had no ſort of effect upon her; very judiciouſly determining, that charity began at home: but at length ſhe was prevailed on to part with it, upon Wills's giving her at leaſt double the value of it, which ſhe declared would ſcarcely pay the expence of a meſſenger being ſent to the next market town, tho' within two miles, to bring her a dinner

next day. This bargain, however diſadvantageouſly concluded, gave great ſatisfaction to Wills, who hurried out to the door where the poor boy was waiting for him. "Here, my lad, here's ſome ſupper "for your mother and you; and d'ye hear, "here's a quarter of a guinea for you, and "take care and behave well."

"Sure," ſays the boy, "you miſtake, "Sir; you never ſaw me before, and you "can't intend this for me."

"Yes, yes, I do: go, go along home "as faſt as you can."

"Then God Almighty bleſs you," adds the boy, dropping on his knees, "for now "I ſhall pay this to my maſter, and an-"other fortnight will clear us, and then "we ſhall live as we did before."

"Get up, ſirrah," ſaid Wills impatiently, "don't ſtay to thank me, but "go home as faſt as you can."

The appearance of anger in his benefactor, frightened the boy, and he went off

off as hard as he could run. Wills returned to his company, and after drinking a couple more pots of the reviving cordial, they retired to their chambers fatigued with their walk. In one room were two flock beds, which Wills, and one of his companions, took poſſeſſion of; the other, who was a little indiſpoſed, was indulged with the beſt bed in the houſe.

Here we ſhall leave them to enjoy their reſt, ſweetened by wearineſs, and take the opportunity of bringing the reader to the more intimate acquaintance of Wills and his company, and aſſign the reaſon for this long walk of theirs.

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

In which the reader may ſatisfy his curioſity, if he has any.

FRANCIS WILLS, whom our reader has juſt had a glimpſe of, was the only ſon of a gentleman, who, in the early part of his life, had met ſeveral mortifications from the ſeverity and moroſeneſs of his father's temper; and who, in truth, was remarkable for little elſe than poſſeſſing great property, and indulging his paſſions to their utmoſt extent; in conſequence of which, an attempt to reſiſt his will and pleaſure, or to contradict him, never failed to draw down his utmoſt fury upon the offending party. He had only this one boy, for his wife died when ſhe had been married to him about three years; and as the gentleneſs of her diſpoſition could but badly ſupport the ill treatment ſhe continually met with, her ſpirits at laſt became broken; and not having a wiſh to live, ſhe

indulged

indulged her deſpair and melancholy, 'till the kindly hand of death drew the curtain of everlaſting night, and finiſhed her ſorrows and her life together. The old man lamented for a ſhort time the loſs of his wife, not ſo much from any principle of tenderneſs, as from the reflection what a prudent and good houſekeeper he had loſt, for in this light he chiefly beheld her; and he grieved for the trouble he ſhould have in looking out for another, on whom he could rely, and who would prove as faithful to him as his wife had been. But, on the other hand, he was releaſed from an enormous expence; for, during the laſt declining months of the poor lady's exiſtence, ſhe was continually attended by the phyſical tribe, who, though they found the diſorder ſhe was afflicted with beyond the reach of medicine, yet conſtantly viſited her, and, according to her huſband's report, never, in all that time, refuſed a fee. All their ſolicitations and recommendations

dations to induce her to consent to a change of air were in vain; she found herself decay, and should she recover, it would only renew the scene of her former uneasinesses; and while she was ill, though she was not treated with the tenderness she merited, yet there was a temporary suspension of her sufferings. She remained, therefore, where she was, which she knew would gratify the avarice of her husband, who dreaded the expences which would necessarily attend her going to any water-drinking place, and expired under her evils. Whether it was, that the old gentleman's fame was bruited abroad in the country, and the ladies dreaded him; or whether he thought one wife was sufficient for any man; or from what other reasons we know not, but, certain it is, that he never married a second time. His attention was dedicated to his son, who, providentially for him, was placed under the tuition of the curate of the parish in which his father lived. This

curate

curate was one of those instances of neglected merit, which are so frequently met with in the church. With every requisite to form the divine and the gentleman, with a wife and two children, he was obliged to subsist on fifty pounds a year. He had no friends, and it was very proper that he should be starved for having the imprudence to marry. However, there was one happiness attended him in this cure; for the rector was so much attached to his bottle, and his fondness for good living, that he seldom troubled him, and, conscious that he was much inferior to him in point of literature, he wisely avoided all disputes and altercations with him. The parishioners liked and were so well satisfied with him, that the rector was at liberty to follow his favourite pursuits, whilst the curate was admired and esteemed by every body. *Laudatur et alget*, might have been his motto with the greatest propriety. To this man's care was the boy, our hero's father, when about five

years old, committed, with an appointment of fifty pounds a year, with which, and ſome preſents conſiderable to him, tho' but inſignificant in the eyes of the old man, his life paſſed more comfortably than heretofore. With him the young lad remained till he was fit to go to the univerſity, for his father determined he ſhould have more ſenſe than himſelf, if poſſible. And here we muſt do him the juſtice to ſay, that he ſupported him very genteelly while he was at Oxford, and intended to have given him a profeſſion to enable him to get his bread in caſe any accident ſhould happen to him.

In his viſits to his father's, during the vacations, he ſaw and admired the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, whoſe name was Whitlock. A man whoſe education and family were very nearly equal with Mr. Wills's father; and though he was one, who might be reckoned warm and comfortable, yet could he by no means be put in competition with him in point of wealth.

The

The young people, mutually enamoured, ſoon came to a proper explanation; and in a little time the father perceived the young gentleman's attachment to his daughter, and having aſked her about it, ſhe very ingenuouſly confeſſed, "that Mr. Wills "had endeavoured to render himſelf agree-"able to her, and had ſucceeded; that he "always deferred aſking his conſent to "render him happy with her, till he was "entirely aſſured of her inclination for "him; and that he ſhould then be more "properly entitled, and with greater pro-"bability of ſucceſs could alſo aſk his fa-"ther's permiſſion to marry her, whoſe "conſent he had no doubt of, from the "great tenderneſs and generoſity he had "lately experienced from him."

"Well, child," returned the father, "I "have heard a very good character of Mr. "Wills, and believe he is an honeſt young "man; his father and I have been old ac-"quaintances, and when he comes here

"again

" again I will ſpeak to him, and aſk him
" what his intentions are towards you; and
" then go over and tell his father the whole
" affair, and ſettle matters with him, if it
" ſhall prove agreeable. If it does, I have
" no objection to him as a ſon."

This made his daughter very happy: and when young Wills came the next day, ſhe told him of it: the nearer he was to the goal of his deſires, the happier he was; and every approximation rendered him additional pleaſure, as it removed a dreaded difficulty. The conſent and approbation of the father of his dear Nancy, was a great ſtroke in his favour: and he was congratulating himſelf upon it in his own breaſt, when Mr. Whitlock came in upon the lovers, as they were ſitting together, holding a conſultation on the tickliſh ſituation of their affairs. " Mr. Wills," ſaid the old man, rather abruptly, " I have
" been acquainted with your attachment to
" my daughter, and hope you mean honour-
" ably by her." " It

"It is my only intention."

"I do not doubt it; but as your father "knows nothing of this, it will not be pru- "dent to ſuffer you to continue viſiting "my daughter, till he has given his appro- "bation. I confeſs I ſhould like you to "be married to Nancy very well; and, as "far as I can, will forward the matter: I "will give you two thouſand five hundred "pounds down with her; and, as ſhe is "my only child, you ſhall have all I am "worth, which will be as much more, at "my death. I do not know how this may "pleaſe your father, but as he and I have "been old neighbours, I will go over and "ſmoke a pipe with him this afternoon, "and talk over this matter."

The young people, full of acknowledge- ments and gratitude for his good nature, returned him all their thanks; and when he ſet out on the journey that was to determine their happineſs or miſery, ſent forth their prayers for his ſucceſs. Wills,

who

who knew his father's temper extremely well, was not a little apprehenſive, that the event of this negociation would not anſwer their expectations or wiſhes; however, he did not communicate his fears to his poor Nancy, who ſat in a ſtate of anxious uncertainty by his ſide. He endeavoured to diſpel her apprehenſions, and to inſpire her with hope, though he had but little himſelf.

While they were thus employed, Mr. Whitlock had reached old Wills's houſe, and found him at home and alone. "So "neighbour," quoth Wills.

"Servant, ſervant, Maſter Wills," replied Whitlock; "I am come to ſmoke a "pipe with you."

"Aye, and welcome," quoth Wills.

The pipes were brought; their tobacco-boxes, replete with the ſweet-ſcented Oroonoko, were produced; and a jug, foaming with potent October, was placed in the midſt. Already were they half enveloped

veloped in clouds of ſmoke; and already had they diſcuſſed the principal topics of converſation and country news in their own way. The third glaſs of ale had began to elevate their ſpirits, when Whitlock, earneſt to introduce the ſubject he came about, began the following converſation.

CHAPTER IV.

In which ſome parental, political principles, are properly diſplayed and diſcuſſed.

"WHERE's your ſon, Maſter Wills?" ſaid Whitlock.

"I don't know; he's gone abroad ſome-
"where or other; he's ſeldom at home, I
"think. But I hear he's very often at
"your houſe; Nan's grown a ſmart girl."

"Why, yes, ſhe is; and a good girl
"too: and your ſon does come often to
"our houſe, it is true."

"Ah,

"Ah, I'll engage he's a dead hand after "a girl; I was ſo myſelf at his age," ſaid the father. "Look well at home, neigh- "bour, after him."

"I don't think I need be afraid of "Nanny, for ſhe is a very modeſt, good "girl; but I don't like your ſon coming "to ſee her ſo often, unleſs you were ac- "quainted with it."

"Why, ſo I be; I knew it all along."

"Well, then, I ſuppoſe as how all mat- "ters may be made eaſy, then."

"What matters?" ſaid Wills, taking his pipe from his mouth.

"Why, what matters have a young man "and woman to ſettle, when they like one "another? Look you, neighbour Wills, "you and I have been a great while ac- "quainted, and your ſon likes my daugh- "ter; now, if you like on't too, let it be a "match, I ſay. I'll give the girl five-and- "twenty hundred pounds down, and the "reſt of what I am worth at my death.

"Now,

"Now, what ſay you? Will you give the "boy as much?"

"No, that I won't," replied Wills, with inexpreſſible ſurlineſs. "What, give that "fool of a boy ſo much money! He would "not know what to do with it. Beſides, "I have no notion of making him inde-"pendent while I live; no, no, he ſhall "wait for my death: there's a little eſtate "he muſt have, when he is five-and-twenty, "in ſpite of me; but I have no notion of "ſpiriting a boy up, by giving my money "out of my own pocket while I am alive, "to tell me at laſt, as I ſuppoſe will be "the caſe, that he does not care a farthing "for me. When you want to make a "child obedient, keep him in fear of you. "I'll have none of theſe doings here with "me."

"That's hard, too, Maſter Wills: the "young man ſeems very fond of my girl, "and I don't doubt but ſhe will make him "a good wife, and very happy. Come,

"come, think better on it. What ſignifies "it to you, if the girl has not all the for- "tune you might expect: to be ſure you "are a rich man; but if the young people "like one another, you know——"

"What the devil's that to me?" cries Wills, in a rage, daſhing his pipe againſt the table, and breaking it into a thouſand pieces. "What have I to ſay to that? Is "it any thing to me whether he has a "mind to be fond or no? It is a pretty "ſtory, truly: becauſe I am his father, "am I to be accountable for all his fooliſh "actions? No, damn me if ever I give "him a farthing while I can keep it from "him. So then we ſhould have him noſe- "ing me at the veſtry, and at the quarter- "ſeſſions, and theſe places; and after he "was once ſettled, he would have no more "regard for me than an old cart-horſe. "No, no; I'll keep him obedient to me, if "keeping money from him will do it: "and ſo, Maſter Whitlock, you may do as

"you

"you pleaſe with your daughter, and I "will do as I pleaſe with my ſon."

"I don't care three farthings for you or "your ſon," replies Whitlock; "and I'll "be damn'd if you or your ſon ſhall ever "touch a penny of mine. Adſheart, ſure "ſhe is as good as you."

Away he flung, and left old Wills by himſelf, muttering, and curſing every thing and every body that was near him. When Whitlock arrived at home, he found the lovers ſtill together. Young Wills's fears were realized, when he ſaw the old man enter the room. "It is all over," ſaid he, ſtarting up; "I muſt relinquiſh my deareſt "hopes, through my father's ſeverity."

"You muſt indeed, Sir."

"I knew it, and dreaded it. Nancy, "muſt we part?"

"You muſt, Sir. Your father's treat-"ment of me was not to be borne, nor "will I bear it. From henceforth you

" muſt forbear viſiting my daughter. I " have no objection to you."

The poor girl ſat drown'd in tears; and her father, at Wills's requeſt, related all that had paſſed between his father and him; and, concluding with once more declaring, that he ſhould have nothing to do with his child, begged of him to retire, and ſent his daughter up ſtairs.

Wills took his leave, and mounted his horſe with a heavy heart, and, in no very ſweet temper, went homewards. It was totally indifferent to him where he went; but as he had ſomething of his father's diſpoſition in him, and was much offended at what had paſſed, it naturally occurred to him to revenge himſelf upon the object who had occaſioned his preſent misfortune, which was no other than his own father. Soured with the diſappointment, and ſtung to the heart by the refuſal he had met with, he haſtened home. The father was in no better humour than the ſon; they ſeemed

ſeemed prepared for an engagement; and waited not long for an opportunity to begin. "Pray, Sir," ſaid the father, "how "came it into your head that I would give "you five-and-twenty hundred pounds?"

"Becauſe, Sir, I thought you wiſhed to "ſee me happy, and without Miſs Whit-"lock I never ſhall be ſo: I have long "loved her, and believe ſhe is worthy my "affections: her father was willing to con-"tribute every thing in his power to make "us ſo, and I am very ſorry that mine "ſhould put a trifling ſum in competition "with my eternal happineſs."

"What, Sir, do you begin already to "make reflections? I ſee what a fine paſs "I ſhould have brought myſelf to, if I "had been fooliſh enough to have com-"plied with your deſires: make yourſelf "eaſy, for by G— you ſhan't have a half-"penny from me while I live."

"You may keep it, Sir," replied the ſon; "I want it only as the means of

" making me bleſt with the woman I love.
" But, as you prefer your money to me,
" it is proper that you ſhould be left to
" enjoy it. In a few months my grand-
" father's eſtate will become mine, by vir-
" tue of his will: I ſhall then trouble you
" no longer. I am obliged to you for
" what you have done for me, but your
" laſt action is ſufficient to cancel every
" tie. I take my leave of you, Sir. You
" can have no regard for a ſon, whoſe
" happineſs is ſo very indifferent to you.
" If you could not have afforded to pay
" ſuch a ſum, your refuſal might have
" been juſtified. But I find myſelf grow-
" ing warm, and if I ſtay much longer,
" may unhappily fail in that reſpect I owe
" to a father. Farewell, Sir."

He ſtalked out of the room, and, call-ing for his horſe, took the road for Lon-don.

His father remained motionleſs after his departure: ſo great was the conflict in his boſom

boſom between anger, ſurprize, and love for his ſon, who had never given him the leaſt offence before. At length his fury, aſſiſted by his avarice, got the better of every other conſideration, and he began to ſhew his return to his ſpeech and powers, by throwing thoſe things that were neareſt him into the fire with great dexterity, at the ſame time thundering out vollies of unconnected curſes. His ſervants ſuffered in proportion; and ſo great was his reſentment againſt his ſon for treating his paternal authority with ſo little reſpect, that when his rage had ſubſided a little, he determined never to have any thing more to ſay to him. Full of this good intention, he ſent for an attorney the next day to make his will. As his property was chiefly perſonal, and of his own acquiring, he might diſpoſe of it to whom he pleaſed; but this was a point not eaſily to be ſettled: for though he had two brothers and a ſiſter, who were married and had fami-

lies, yet, having quarrelled with them all, and never ſpoken or had any intercourſe with them for a great number of years, he determined to take no notice of them, or their families. He then turned his eyes to his late wife's family, and there he ſettled at once. She was the eldeſt daughter of four when he married her, and there was a great diſparity in their ages; for her ſiſters were mere children when ſhe was married to Mr. Wills, who, upon that occaſion, acted with unuſual generoſity, and took her without any fortune. Indeed her father could not very well ſpare it, as his affairs were not a little embarraſſed; ſo Wills, who was fond of her, made a virtue of neceſſity, and received her without a penny. Yet, as we are obliged to adhere to truth, we muſt confeſs, that he prided himſelf ſo much upon this action, that in the fullneſs of his heart, and eſpecially when he was angry with his wife, which happened very frequently, he uſed to recount

count this diſintereſted action of his with great pomp, extolling himſelf, and depreciating her in very indelicate terms. This ſhe was obliged to ſuffer: her end has been already related. To thoſe three remaining ſiſters of his wife's he therefore reſolved to leave all his fortune. His will was prepared and executed in due form, and he began to relapſe into his former inſenſibility, as his revenge was gratified.

CHAPTER V.

Contains the hiſtory of Mr. FRANCIS WILLS's *father.*

YOUNG Wills left his father's houſe in ſome deſpondence. He was turned out upon the world's wide common, without a friend, and very little money in his pocket. He was never in ſuch a ſituation before. He had always a home to reſort to: but where ſhould he fly to now? At

laſt he recollected a Mrs. Rickſall, who formerly had lived at Oxford, and now reſided in London. She had been always a good friend of his, and having met with misfortunes, was obliged to keep a coffee-houſe. To her therefore he determined to go. He met with a very civil reception from her, and, as he frankly and openly diſcloſed his preſent ſituation, and the cauſe of it, ſhe treated him with great tenderneſs. After his arrival in town, he wrote ſeveral letters to his dear Nancy, to none of which he received any anſwer. At laſt he was aſſured, and from undoubted authority, that ſhe was married, obliged by her father to take the firſt man that preſented himſelf, who was approved of by him. On the receipt of this piece of intelligence he fell into a deep melancholy, from which he could ſcarcely be recovered. Mrs. Rickſall uſed every means in her power to amuſe him, but in vain: however, her daughter Charlotte, young, handſome, gentle,

gentle, and fond of Wills, ſucceeded much better. By conſoling and indulging him, ſhe at laſt ſtole into the place that Miſs Whitlock formerly poſſeſſed in his heart. By being his eternal companion, ſhe, at length, became neceſſary to him; and his gratitude to her for taking ſo great a ſhare in his troubles, ſupplied, for a while, the office of affection. When he firſt came to Mrs. Rickſall's, he wanted about ſeven months of the age preſcribed for the enjoyment of his little eſtate, which amounted to about two hundred and twenty pounds a year. He had been with her but a little above two, when he heard the news of Miſs Whitlock's marriage. There is no hour in which the heart is leſs guarded than that of diſtreſs. How many tender paſſions inſinuate themſelves in that moment, and in what different diſguiſes!—Wills, who had, till that time, beheld Charlotte Rickſall with the eyes of indifference, now thought he ſaw charms diſ-

played in every action and turn. He was in affliction; and gratitude to her mother, who had treated him all along with great generosity and kindness, made him look more respectfully on the daughter. He was neglected by his father; and, well knowing the severity of his temper, judged, and very rightly, that he should never be recalled to his house again. "This young "girl is agreeable; she is more, is really "handsome; is good tempered; and, by "her behaviour, gives me room to think "I am not indifferent to her. What should "prevent me then" (for thus he reasoned with himself) "from taking a woman to "my bosom who really feels a passion for "me? I want only a return to that fond-"ness I wish to inspire: and if my once "beloved Nancy had resisted the importu-"nities, or violence of her father, I would "have lived for her alone." Whenever he reflected thus, he constantly grew melancholy and uneasy; but the remembrance of

of the pleaſures he had loſt was ſoon diſſipated and baniſhed, by the attention and aſſiduities that Charlotte conſtantly ſhewed him. He was pleaſed with them; they became habitual; and the ſmalleſt compliment he could pay her, was to appear equally pleaſed with and attentive to her. The time was now nearly elapſed, and he was priding himſelf on his aſſuming his independence, and becoming maſter of his fortune. "How can I better employ it," ſaid he, "than in making the girl happy, "who has attached and devoted herſelf to "me, from the mere impulſe of paſſion "and regard; for ſo I am at liberty to "think by her behaviour to me." He addreſſed himſelf to her mother, whoſe conſent he readily obtained; and ſoon after was married to Charlotte, whoſe affection ſeemed to encreaſe every day.—The caſe was otherwiſe with Wills. The fit of paſſion was paſt, and he began to look upon things with other eyes. He did not

poſſeſs

poſſeſs that affection for his wife, which, founded in the heart, and matured by judgement, attaches us irrevocably to the beloved object. He frequently formed compariſons between Mrs. Wills and his Nancy, whom he conſidered as ſacrificed, and which were always rather injurious to the former. The diſguſt he began to conceive for his wife was increaſed by the fondneſs ſhe always ſhewed him, and which, as he had no inclination to return it, became troubleſome. He ſought relief from his own thoughts in company, and home was the laſt place he wiſhed to go to. "Per-haps," ſaid he to himſelf, as he was going out one day, "poor Nancy is as unhappy as I am; and my cruel father, by "not parting with that money which he "cannot enjoy himſelf, has made us both "wretched. Yet it would be an alleviation "of my grief, if I thought ſhe was happier "than I am." Theſe reflections were intolerable, and he did every thing in his

power

power to get rid of them. Variety of company induced expence, and caſh muſt be had. He mortgaged: and engaging in play one night, loſt a conſiderable part of the money. Soured with his ill fortune, weary of himſelf and the world, and accuſing the ſeverity of his deſtiny, he was ſurprized by a meſſage from his father, who deſired to ſee him inſtantly. As he was in a good turn of mind to reproach him for all the ills his avarice had brought on him, he obeyed the ſummons. He found his father waiting for him at a neighbouring tavern. "So, Sir," ſaid the old gentleman to him, "I hear you are "married."

"I am, Sir."

"And how came you to have the aſſu-"rance to marry without aſking my leave? "To go and throw yourſelf away!"

"Sir," replied the ſon, interrupting him, and ſpeaking with a ſtern and determined voice, "your refuſal to let me

"marry

" marry where the intereſts of my heart
" were engaged, has been the deſtruction
" of me, and in a little time you will be
" childleſs. Your wealth will never pro-
" cure you another ſon; and, but that you
" are my father, and, badly as you have
" treated me, are entitled to reſpect, I
" would revenge myſelf upon the author of
" all my miſery, which encreaſes on me
" every hour. Farewell, Sir. A ſmall
" part of that ſum you poſſeſs, and which
" to you is uſeleſs, would have made me
" happy."

He flung out of the room, nor would he return to hear what his father wanted to ſay to him. He found himſelf grow warm, and feared leſt, in his paſſion, he ſhould be guilty of an outrage towards the author of his being, that he ſhould never forgive himſelf for; and this he dreaded the more, as he was at that moment preſſed by thoſe very evils his father had brought on him. The old man, finding himſelf

thus

thus treated by his ſon, returned to the country, fully reſolved to make no alteration in his will, which he found ſome inclination in himſelf to have done, if he could have brought his ſon to terms; who grew more unhappy every hour, and, to baniſh reflection, attached himſelf very cloſely to his bottle. This was expenſive; more money was raiſed upon his eſtate; and his uneaſineſs was rather augmented than diminiſhed, when Mrs. Wills informed him ſhe was with child. Though he had no affection for her, yet he always treated her with tenderneſs and civility, which ſerved to render her life tolerable, though not happy. His attention and care of her when pregnant, and his aſſiduities when delivered of a fine boy, whoſe adventures fill the following ſheets, gave ſome hopes of returning love: but theſe hopes were vain. He purſued his former mode of living, and, in a twelvemonth after the birth of the child, fell a ſacrifice to the bottle.

bottle. Thus ended his days, who might have been an ornament to ſociety, a comfort to his friends, and the happy father of a reſpectable family, had he been indulged in the reaſonable wiſhes of his heart. On the contrary, he lived without peace, and expired without hope, convinced from his own ſufferings, that he could not be more miſerable in any other world than he had been in this.

CHAPTER VI.

In which is proved the great truth of the adage, that "it is an ill wind which "blows no-body good."

MRS. WILLS, who really loved her huſband, remained inconſolable.—She had very little to ſupport herſelf with, and a child to maintain. Her mother, who was yet living, took her to her houſe, in hopes the grandfather would do ſomething for

for the boy. While this was the ſituation of the family in London, other affairs were tranſacted in the country. Mr. Kingly, father to old Wills's late wife, died much about this time, and left his daughters a bare ſubſiſtence, and no more. Their want of fortunes, not more than their want of beauty, prevented their getting huſbands, which the two elder, Patience and Prudence, long had ſet their caps at: but they were deformed. The younger of the three, Priſcilla, was ſhapely, but very homely, and poſſeſſed of more good nature than the other two, whoſe diſappointments in life had rendered their tempers as ſour as their manners were ridiculous; nor could all their affectation of piety, or pretended abhorrence of the men, procure them the ſatisfaction of being praiſed or admired, or give them the leaſt chance of attaining, what they longed for, the power of changing their names. They were, therefore, very much chagrined, when an eminent attorney

attorney in the neighbourhood paid his addreſſes to Priſcilla, and purſued her with extraordinary aſſiduity. Great though the friendſhip was in which the ſiſters lived, yet the preference given to the youngeſt affected them; and with great diligence they ſet about prognoſticating this affair would come to nothing. Patience, from ſeveral very ominous dreams which ſhe had never known to fail with any one, declared poſitively, it would be no match. Prudence, from coffee-grounds, and the more veritable oracle of a dirty pack of cards, profeſſed herſelf of the ſame opinion. Pris, whoſe good ſenſe and reflection made her think more reaſonably than either of the others, concluded there muſt *more be meant than met the ear*, and waited patiently till time ſhould unravel the myſtery. She did not wait long. Mr. Bickham in a few weeks, after profeſſing his eſteem for her perſon, and adoring the beauties of the mind, which were the moſt eſtimable and

laſting

laſting charms, and aſſuring her of his entire affection for her, preſſed her to name the happy day that would put an end to his anxiety, and render him the joyful companion of her future life. "Mr. Bick-"ham," ſaid ſhe, "it would be ungrateful "in me not to acknowledge the obligation "I am under to you, for thinking ſo well "of me, as to make me your wife; but I "muſt confeſs there is a particularity in "your paying your addreſſes to me, that "ſomewhat ſurprizes me. Far from poſ-"ſeſſing thoſe perſonal beauties which are "in general the principal recommendation "of a wife without a fortune, to entitle "me to the acceptance of a man who holds "that place in life you do, and who has a "good fortune, you ſolicit my hand."

"I certainly do, madam," ſaid the lover, interrupting her. "That ſelf-denial, that "that good ſenſe which can look upon "things in the manner you do, is more "valuable to me, than either beauty or

"riches.

"riches. I want neither. The ſenſible "friend is the character I ſeek in a wife, "and which I am convinced I ſhall find in "you. Therefore, madam, the objections "you make are very trifling."

"I cannot be induced to think ſo; and "that prudence you ſo highly commend, "will not ſuffer me to enter into an alli-"ance with a man to whoſe fortune I can-"not add; nor will my ſpirit permit me "to think of becoming a burden to you, "or the reproach of your family. The "cloaths I ſhould wear, the very food I "ſhould eat, would eternally remind me "of my obligations to, and my depen-"dence on, you; and if equality is ne-"ceſſary for the preſervation of friendſhip, "it is more highly ſo for the happineſs of "the marriage ſtate."

"Will you allow nothing for affection, "my dear madam?" replied Bickham. "Surely it is a pleaſure and an happineſs "to oblige thoſe we love."

"It

"It may ſo," interrupted the lady; "but you have ever been eſteemed a pru-"dential man, and are of that age when "paſſion has began to ſubſide: a little "time might make an alteration in your "affection, and I ſhould ſuffer in my own "opinion, as you would not think your-"ſelf bound to regard me in the ſame "light as if I had brought a fortune along "with me equal to your merits, or your "expectations. Therefore, Sir, you will "receive this as my final determination, "that I cannot think of marrying you in "my preſent ſituation."

This was poſitive. The lady pauſed, and Bickham looked very black upon the occaſion: he had a deſire to ſpeak, yet heſitated. At laſt he thus addreſſed him-ſelf to her. "And ſuppoſe, madam, that "any lucky chance ſhould make an alter-"ation in your fortune, would my perſon "or propoſals be ſo diſagreeable to you, "that you would refuſe me?"

"It

"It is only a ſuppoſition: and that is a "ground I cannot go upon. However, if "I was ſure——"

This bait took.

"May I then promiſe myſelf that hap-"pineſs?"

"It is not impoſſible."

"Then, madam, let me announce the "fortunate change in your circumſtances, "and receive the reward of your hand."

Miſs Priſcilla expreſſed great ſurprize, ſilently rejoicing at the ſucceſs of her ſcheme; and Bickham ſoon explained himſelf fully, acquainting her of every circumſtance we have before related, concerning the making the will in their favour, the marriage and death of young Wills, and the birth of the child; adding, that the old man began to lament the loſs of his ſon, and abhor his former treatment of him, and that he was in a bad way, not expected to live long; concluding with aſſuring her, that ſhe had nothing to fear from

from any conteſt that might ariſe about the diſpoſal of his property, as he had taken the greateſt care to draw the will in the ſtrongeſt and moſt binding terms.—Miſs Priſcilla thanked him for his kindneſs in acquainting her with this unexpected turn of fortune, and had no doubt of her being very ſecure, as he was concerned in drawing the will. As to giving him any poſitive anſwer at preſent, ſhe deſired to be excuſed, as this account had really fluttered her ſpirits ſo, ſhe could not expreſs herſelf; but ſhe hoped to ſee him ſoon again. After recommending ſilence and ſecreſy to her in the ſtrongeſt manner, he took his leave, promiſing to return with all poſſible expedition, as he could not live out of her ſight. As ſoon as ever he was gone, Priſcilla haſtened to her ſiſters. Her countenance beſpoke her pleaſure, and they ſoon perceived it. "What now," ſaid Prue, "are we to have a wedding ſoon, that you

"appear ſo joyful? you ſeem mightily "pleaſed!"

"I am, indeed; for I have received "ſome very good news."

"I thought I ſhould hear of ſome good "news," replied Pate, "for I dreamed of "the devil and a black-handled knife laſt "night."

"You might," replied Pris; "yet my "intelligence concerns neither: but if you "will liſten, I will tell you all I know."

She accordingly informed them of every thing ſhe had learned from Mr. Bickham. Though their joy was great at being thus, ſo unexpectedly, raiſed from a ſtate of penury to independence and fortune, yet they could not debar themſelves from the pleaſure of aſſuring Pris, that they had a preſcience of this affair; and the one told her dreams, and the other repeated ſome lucky omens which had occurred. However, when they had paid theſe compliments to their own ſagacity and perſpicuity, the three

ſiſters

ſiſters entered into cloſe council, and finally agreed that, ſhould matters turn out as Mr. Bickham had prognoſticated, they would live together, and the ſurvivors ſhould have all the fortune. This was ratified in the moſt ſolemn manner; and they began to expect the old man's death with an avidity that was very natural. In a ſhort time Bickham rode over to them, and, as it was near ten o'clock at night when he reached their houſe, they conjectured, very reaſonably, that ſomething extraordinary was the cauſe of this untimely viſit. And herein were they not deceived: for he told them he had heard Mr. Wills had a paralytic ſtroke that day; and, to make himſelf ſure of the truth of the matter, he went to ſee the phyſician who was called in on the occaſion, who delivered it as his opinion, that he could not live a week longer. He felicitated his miſtreſs upon this lucky accident, as he termed it; and went away. It is needleſs to inform

the reader, who we are ſure has much penetration, that it was not ſo much the elegance of Priſcilla's perſon, or the charms of her underſtanding, as the fortune ſhe would be entitled to on Mr. Wills's death, and the proſpect ſhe had of inheriting the reſpective portions of her ſiſters, ſhe being the youngeſt, that induced Bickham to pay his addreſſes to her. Indeed as he was a prudent man, he had her in his eye from the moment he drew the old man's will; and he reaſoned, not injudiciouſly, that he ſhould ſucceed in his application to the lady, by the care and intereſt he took in ſerving her. He therefore rejoiced not a little at this annunciation of the old man's departure; and ſo ſure was he of the match, that he abſolutely had began to treat concerning the purchaſe of an eſtate of eight hundred pounds a year, that was to be ſold in the neighbourhood, and which he thought would be a bargain.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

Many things fall between the cup and the lip. A diſappointment.

OLD Wills's death evened as the phyſician had foretold. The Miſſes Kingley, who were executrices, proved the will, and took poſſeſſion of the effects and eſtate of the deceaſed, which fell very little ſhort of ſixty thouſand pounds. Bickham was extremely active and aſſiduous, and nothing could equal his diſintereſtedneſs upon this occaſion. Always ready at every call; and ſo attentive, that he would undoubtedly have attracted the regard of Priſcilla, did ſhe not conceive that the proſpect of enjoying her fortune ſtimulated his diligence. Bickham was not a little pleaſed in finding the ſum ſo much larger than he expected; and the civility with which he had been treated during his tranſacting this buſineſs, had realized his hopes,

and he looked upon himſelf as abſolutely poſſeſſed of the fortune of Priſcilla; for whom, if the truth was known, he had but little regard. During the hurry of the funeral, the preparations for appearing in mourning, and receiving the viſits and congratulations of the company in the country, he was obliged to be ſilent; nor did he once mention his paſſion. The reſpectful diſtance he obſerved, and the attention he paid to his dear miſtreſs, entitled him, the firſt opportunity he had, to expreſs his inability to remain in ſuch a ſituation any longer, and to preſs her to put an end to his probation, and complete his happineſs, by beſtowing her hand on him.

"Sir," replied the lady, "I muſt act as "honourably by you, as you have done "by me. I am under infinite obligations "to you, and have not a proper return in "my power to make you. For though I "feel not that paſſion for you which is re-"quiſite to make matrimony a ſtate of rap-

"ture, yet I think I could live very hap-
"pily with you:" (his hopes began to di-
late.) "But I have entered into a mutual
"agreement with my ſiſters, by which we
"have bound ourſelves in a large penalty,
"above half our fortunes, never to marry,
"or leave each other while alive. This
"will be a ſufficient reaſon for declining
"the honour of your addreſſes for the fu-
"ture."

She ſtopped. Bickham was thunder-ſtruck. His hopes were now like a blad-der compreſſed. "Perhaps, madam," ſaid he, "there may be a means to ſet aſide "this agreement, and to avoid the pay-"ment of this penalty, if I could ſee the "deed."

"There is no occaſion, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "for it was done with my conſent."

"And ſo, madam, I have been made a "fool of at laſt."

"Not by me, Sir."

"Yes, madam, you gave me hopes."

"You imagined ſo, Sir; but I muſt take "my leave of this converſation. The tea "waits, will you drink any?"

He refuſed, and they parted without ceremony. The next day he ſent in a ſwinging bill for his trouble and expences; and endeavoured, by that means, to indemnify himſelf for the loſs he ſuſtained, by Priſcilla's refuſing him.

In looking over the papers and letters of Mr. Wills as they came to the hands of Priſcilla, who inſpected theſe affairs, they found three or four letters of Mrs. Rickſall's to Mr. Wills, acquainting him of the declining ſtate of her daughter; and how incapable ſhe was of maintaining his grandſon. Soon after the old gentleman's deceaſe, and before Mrs. Rickſall could have any knowledge of it, another letter came from her, informing him, that her daughter was dead, and that ſhe was incapable of ſupporting young Wills. Pris, whoſe humanity was predominant, immediately called

called a council of her ſiſters, and, after ſome time ſpent in debate, it was unanimouſly agreed, that, as they poſſeſſed that fortune by the caprice of the grandfather, which ſhould of right belong to the child, and as it had no friends ſo capable of taking care of it as they were, they ſhould immediately ſend for him, and educate him properly. Priſcilla, whoſe affection for her ſiſter's offspring was very ſtrong, propoſed to go to London herſelf for him. The propoſal was applauded and accepted, and ſhe arrived in town without meeting any accident.

Her curioſity, and impatience to ſee the child, drove her to Mrs. Rickſall's rather earlier than was cuſtomary for ſtrangers to viſit, eſpecially in London, and in the morning. Little ceremony was neceſſary upon the occaſion. Pris announced the cauſe of her coming, which was extremely pleaſing to the grandmother, who treated her with peculiar civility and good nature.

The little Francis, then about three years old, was ordered to be brought in. A little blooming cherub it was: and the aunt immediately perceived, or fancied ſhe perceived, which was juſt as good, a very ſtriking likeneſs of her ſiſter, who it ſeems had engroſſed all the beauty of the family. If ſhe was pleaſed and attracted by the looks of the boy, he was not leſs ſo with her. He went to her without reluctance, and remained with her through choice. He ſaw ſhe was fond of him; and though ſhe was homely, had a great deal of good-nature delineated in her countenance. Inſtinct directs animals of the domeſtic kind to attach themſelves to thoſe perſons whom they ſee fond, or who take notice of them. Perhaps it may be from ſome expreſſion in the face. Perhaps it is from ſome peculiar ſmell, that a dog or cat ſhall pay more regard to, and fondle on one perſon in a room in preference to any body elſe. We know not the cauſe, but the effects are frequent.

quent. Children, in the ſame manner, and perhaps from the ſame principle of inſtinct, ſhall be fonder of one perſon than another. In this very predicament, luckily for himſelf, was the boy. Mrs. Rickſall, fearing the child might be troubleſome to Miſs Kingley, who kept him on her lap, attempted to take him away from her: he refuſed to go. It was a compliment that pleaſed her highly.—"But," ſaid he, "you are my aunt."

"I am, my dear."

"But you ſhall be my mamma, and "that ſhall be my grand-mamma."

"I will," ſaid ſhe, "my little angel, in "the utmoſt extent of the word." And ſhe preſſed the ſmiling babe to her boſom.

Gratitude and humanity compel us to return the fondneſs of thoſe who ſeem pleaſed with us. Every tender paſſion in the aunt's boſom was awakened, and ſet in motion, by the innocent endearments of her nephew. It is needleſs to ſay they all

ranked on his ſide. An invitation to dinner was accepted: and Pris agreed to take the boy home with her that night. His grandmother was buſy in packing up his little things, and Frank was very happy with his mamma, as he called her; nor did he at night expreſs any great reluctance at parting with Mrs. Rickſall, and the enraptured aunt carried him off in triumph.

No beau was ever prouder of a birth-day ſuit, no coquette of a lover which ſhe had inveigled from her friend, or no ſquire of a fox that had coſt him twelve hours chace, than was Priſcilla Kingley in carrying home her little nephew. A child was a novelty, and her ſiſters received it with pleaſure and affection; but Frank liked only his aunt Pris. His infant years paſſed over as thoſe of moſt other children; but he always diſplayed a tenderneſs and generoſity in his diſpoſition which delighted his favourite aunt, who enabled him to indulge

indulge the humanity and benevolence of his heart, much againſt the inclination of her other ſiſters, and not without frequent prophecies of his becoming a beggar.—However, theſe were all thrown away; for Priſcilla found ſomething in his actions which her heart could not help approving, and ſhe in ſecret applauded what her ſiſters ſo much cenſured: She alſo redeemed his eſtate, and took it into her own hands.

Bickham, whoſe vanity would not ſuffer him to relinquiſh his hopes ſo quietly, ſtill thought, that, did he throw himſelf in her way, he might be again taken notice of. But in this he was totally diſappointed; for every attempt he made to renew his intimacy was baffled, and he himſelf treated with the moſt mortifying contempt. As he would not ſuffer himſelf to be perſuaded that his perſon was diſagreeable, or his behaviour the means of his being rejected, he looked out for another cauſe, and found it in the perſon of young Wills, whom

whom his aunt was extremely fond of. This made Bickham immediately his enemy; and he began to caſt about how to remove this impediment to his wiſhes. How he ſucceeded will be more fully treated of in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER VIII.

The author's learning diſplayed. The continuation of the hiſtory: and another ſtranger introduced.

WE are informed by ſome of thoſe writers, who, for the benefit and inſtruction of mankind, have travelled into divers countries, and each of whom, like another Ulyſſes,

——Multorum providus urbes
Et mores hominum inſpexit——*

* Wiſely got an inſight into the conſtitutions and cuſtoms of many nations.

that

that it is the cuſtom in Spain at the grandeſt tables, after you have eaten of the firſt courſe that is ſerved up, to retire into a contiguous gallery, and there walk about for a ſtated time, either to recover your appetite, or digeſt what you have eaten; and, upon a ſignal given by the Major-domo, the company all return to a freſh ſervice, which the table is covered with. In imitation of that laudable cuſtom it is, without doubt, that authors have divided their books into chapters; giving their readers, as the Spaniſh Dons do their gueſts, an opportunity to recover and refreſh themſelves. But thoſe opportunities are not ſo often required where the food is light, tender, and delicate, as where it is groſs, luſcious and cloying.

But to return to our hiſtory. Bickham propoſed to himſelf a great advantage by ſtealing Frank away, and a much greater by reſtoring him to his aunt again, in conſequence of the diligent ſearch that he

ſhould

ſhould make after him, and thereby gaining the affections of his miſtreſs. He began to contrive, and had actually traced out, a very feaſible, plauſible ſcheme, and one that might have ſucceeded, had not it been for a ſmall accident that prevented the execution of it: This was nothing more than the whole family removing from that part of the country without poor Mr. Bickham's knowledge or privity. How this came to paſs ſhould be explained to the reader.

Young Wills was now in his tenth year, and beloved by every body about the country. His honeſt, open countenance beſpoke the goodneſs of his temper; and his numberleſs little acts of generoſity, his benevolence. He was active as light, and ſtrong beyond his age; and, for the little education he had received, ſhewed ſigns of an excellent capacity, and great underſtanding; but his talents wanted cultivation, and there was no opportunity of having

having them properly directed where they then were: for the poor curate, whom we formerly mentioned as the tutor of Wills's father, and his wife, were both dead; and, but for miſſes Kingleys, their children would have been in a very poor condition: Old Wills had reproached him for his ſon's want of duty, and immediately withdrew the fifty pounds a year he had paid him. This affected the curate very much: and the ſight of his children, deprived of future ſuſtenance, almoſt broke his heart. He ſaw Wills die, and his hopes were extinct; but ſome of the old ſervants of the family having mentioned this gentleman to the Miſſes Kingleys, when they acceded to the eſtate, they agreed to pay him what Wills did. Pris, who was the principal agent upon all theſe occaſions where ſhe had an opportunity of diſplaying her goodnature, and indulging her humane diſpoſition, when ſhe waited on him to acquaint him with their determination in his favour,

and

and to entreat him to accept this little acknowledgement of his merit at their hands, was ſo much pleaſed with the regularity and neatneſs with which his family was brought up, and ſo delighted with the perſons of his daughters, that ſhe deſired they might come frequently to the hall, and aſſured the father they might depend upon her protection in future life. This change of fortune the poor gentleman was much leſs able to bear, than the tide of adverſity. She took the girls home with her, and the curate and his wife followed them to dinner. Great as his reſignation and patience had been in trouble, he could not command himſelf now. Perhaps, as he grew older, his powers became decayed: However it was, he could not refrain from involuntary burſts of grateful acknowledgements. In vain he endeavoured to ſtifle them; they oppreſſed him, and his heart was too full to give a proper vent to his feelings. He ſtrove to diſpel the

weight

weight that affected his ſpirits. When he had drank a couple of glaſſes of wine after dinner, he found himſelf grow faint; he felt his diſſolution approaching. "Ladies," ſaid the reverend old man, "you "may wonder at what I am going to ſay "to you, but it is very true: My laſt hour "approaches, and life ebbs very faſt: "But I die happy and contented. In theſe "worthy ladies, who have become your "voluntary protectreſſes, you, my dearly-"beloved children, will find an aſylum; "they have offered that to you, which "your poor father could not give you." His colour had changed as he began to ſpeak: his daughters perceived it, and were on each ſide of him on their knees, bathing his chilly hands with their tears: His wife hung in an agony of diſtreſs over him. The three ſiſters wept at the ſcene, for there was ſomething ſo ſolemn and ſtriking in the manner in which he addreſſed

dreſſed them, that they believed his end really approaching. Pris more particularly *wiped her eyes of drops, which ſacred pity had engendered.* Even little Frank abſtained from his play, and became a ſilent, though weeping ſpectator of a ſcene that he did not underſtand: He cried, becauſe every body elſe did. "I have already given "you my word, Sir," ſaid Pris, as he pauſed; "I here repeat it, that I will never "forſake your children."

"And may that holy power which has "ever protected me, never forſake you! "It is a comfort to me, that the Almighty "has allowed me the uſe of my ſenſes in "this my laſt hour; that I have my recol-"lection, and am enabled to face death "with compoſure. I thank thee, my "deareſt Nancy, for the care thou haſt "taken of me through my life ſince I was "wedded to thee, for thy fidelity, and thy "goodneſs. When I am gone, watch

"over

"over theſe poor children. And you, my "dear girls, receive the only legacy your "father has to leave to you, his bleſſing. "Already I have ſowed the ſeeds of virtue "and godlineſs in your young hearts; "may they increaſe, and bear the fruit of "good works! Follow the advice I have "already given you. It only remains, to "offer my thanks to you, ladies, and to "tell you my prayers ſhall aſcend to the "throne of the higheſt, to ſhower down "upon you ten-fold the bleſſings you have "beſtowed upon my poor friendleſs chil-"dren. Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant "depart in peace."

His voice failed him as he ſpoke, and the laſt word was ſcarcely audible. He fell back in his chair; his eyes were cloſed, and he ſeemed as if fallen into a deep ſleep. The diſtreſs and grief his wife and children were in, is inexpreſſible. Prudence haſtened up to her cloſet, and brought down a cordial of her own diſtilling, and pouring ſome of it down his throat,

throat, recovered him again a little; he expreſſed his deſire to be carried home: His requeſt was complied with, and the next day he breathed his laſt. The wife did not long ſurvive him. The two daughters were portioned out to two honeſt young farmers in the neighbourhood by the ſiſters, who contributed an equal ſum for that purpoſe, and live very happy. Had he lived, there was no one to whom Pris would have ſo ſoon entruſted the care of her nephew as to him; but he was at reſt with his fathers, and ſhe was obliged to look out for another.

It had been often debated, in the nocturnal conſultations held after ſupper, among the ſiſters, what profeſſion or trade Frank ſhould be bred up to. Patience, who, as the eldeſt, had a right to ſpeak firſt, declared her opinion that he ſhould be a parſon. Prudence, whoſe ſkill in diſtilling of cordials, making plaiſters, and compounding diet-drinks we have as yet had no opportunity of celebrating,

adviſed

adviſed, that his attention ſhould be directed to the ſtudy of phyſic; adding, that ſhe ſhould be able to form a judgement of the progreſs he ſhould from time to time make, as ſhe underſtood the virtues of herbs, and could venture to ſay, that when he knew any thing of phyſic, he would give her *Balſamic cordial* the preference to all the compoſitions in an apothecary's ſhop. It was Priſcilla's turn. "I don't ſee," ſaid ſhe, "that there is any "occaſion to breed him up to any pro- "feſſion: his grandfather's fortune, which "ſhould of right be his, we enjoy: that "ought to return to him. My proportion "of it ſhall; and, as we have nobody "elſe ſo near of kin to us, I think it but "juſt that he ſhould have it all, when we "have no further occaſion for it. It will "be ſufficient to ſupport him; and we "ſhall augment, rather than decreaſe it. "If he ſhould be obliged to undergo the "ſlavery of acquiring a profeſſion, with-

out

"out having any inclination for it, the law "ſhould be the object of his purſuit, as "he will be thereby enabled to keep what "ſhall be left him." The other two ſiſters cried out againſt law; for, with them, to be a lawyer, and to go to the devil, were ſynonimous terms. Neither would yield: and Pris was near carrying her point. For ſhe foreſaw that the fortune of all the family would, at laſt, center in him: but as ſhe wanted to have him properly educated, and ſaw no proſpect of getting a tutor fit for him where ſhe was, ſhe projected a ſcheme of going nearer London, where, ſhe reaſonably concluded, ſhe ſhould have a greater choice of preceptors, or public places of education. This, however, ſhe feared oppoſition in from her ſiſters; but was very much ſurprized to find the elder leſs repugnant to the ſcheme than ſhe expected. However, it was not agreed upon at firſt, for two reaſons; the one was, that

which

which Pate ſtarted; "what was to be done "with the houſe and lands, which, though "they then loſt by, would be ſtill leſs pro-"fitable in a ſervant's or ſteward's hands." The other Prue was authoreſs of; "That "in London there was no poſſibility of ga-"thering herbs to diſtil, and that it would "be a ſad expence to come into the country "every year to prepare materials to make "her *Balſamic Cordial.*" Pris happily over-ruled both objections: to the firſt ſhe an-ſwered, that a very reputable farmer had that day made propoſals for renting the farm, which were very advantageous, and ſhe particularized them: it was agreed, that it would be much more profitable than even holding it themſelves, and they would treat with him about it the next day. The other objection would not have been ſo ea-ſily got rid of, had not Pris recollected, that there was a poſſibility of her being ad-mitted into the Botanical Garden at Chel-

ſea, where ſhe might improve herſelf in the ſtudy of botany, and have an opportunity of knowing the culture of ſome exotics, which ſhe would never have a chance of ſeeing at all if ſhe ſtayed at home. This ſeemed very feaſible; and the deſire they both had of ſeeing London, got the better of their ſcruples, and had more weight than all Pris's reaſons. Matters were ſoon and happily ſettled to the ſatisfaction of every body, except Bickham and Wills. The former lamented his want of power and opportunity to ſupplant his rival; the latter was ſorry at leaving a place he knew, for one he did not know; and that he ſhould be obliged to quit his play-fellows. The journey was ſafely performed, and the family all ſettled in a genteel and commodious houſe at Chelſea. As the principal reaſon for leaving the country was, to take care of Frank's education, his aunt began to inſpect the academies and public ſeminaries about that

part

part of the environs of London. Much was promiſed in the propoſals made to the public, but every maſter performed a great deal more: however, there was ſomething in their manner that ſhe did not approve; nor could all the flattery they beſtowed upon the boy, who conſtantly accompanied her, change her opinion. She had given over her ſearch in that part of the world, and had determined to break freſh ground. When ſhe returned home, ſhe found her two ſiſters in converſation with the curate and his wife, who had paid them a viſit. The curate was an honeſt, ſenſible man, and ſpoke little; but his wife made up for his deficiency, talked eternally, and knew every body. A more agreeable, or more uſeful acquaintance, could not be procured for the two eldeſt ſiſters: they diſcuſſed, with the greateſt diſpatch, points of public concern; and when the curate's wife began to aſſail the characters, public and private,

of every inhabitant in the town, whether known or unknown, they drew their chairs nearer to her, unwilling to loſe a word. Pris, whoſe attention was not much engaged at the relation, could not help perceiving a degree of mortification in the huſband's countenance, at hearing this torrent of his wife's elocution roar ſo loudly; a current that he had frequently, though ineffectually, endeavoured to dam, or turn into another channel: ſhe therefore requeſted his company to ſee their little garden; and he very gladly accepting the invitation, they left the ſiſters liſtening, *arrectis auribus*, to the viſitor's tale. But as that concerns us very little, we ſhall follow the more reſpectable part of the company into the garden.

The curate obſerved, as he walked, that ſo ſmall a ſpot muſt appear very bad and confined, after the large garden which he ſuppoſed they had in the country.

"It does indeed, Mr. Jefferſon," (for that was his name) ſaid Pris: "but tho' "inconvenient and diſagreeable, I muſt "reconcile myſelf to it, as I was the occa- "ſion of our leaving the country, for "there was no opportunity of having my "nephew properly educated there. I have "been at all the ſchools about here, and "I like none of them. Perhaps you, who "have a knowledge of theſe places, can "recommend me to ſome ſenſible and ho- "neſt man, who will take care of my "boy's education: if it was a private tu- "tor, I ſhould be better pleaſed, and "would make it worth his attention to take "care of him."

"Ah, Madam! I wiſh it was in my "power to accept your offer: I would do "juſtice by the young gentleman: But "my wife, Madam; you ſee her, and, to "my ſhame, hear her. She is a very good "woman, but ſhe will talk; and I won-

"der how thoſe good ladies, your ſiſters,
"can liſten to her; for ſhe is not acquaint-
"ed with half the people ſhe talks about;
"and I value my peace too much, to try
"to ſtop her by a ſeaſonable admonition:
"but, as I was ſaying, I ſhould be glad to
"take him myſelf, Madam, if I was not
"apprehenſive my wife would ſpoil him;
"and I will not, for any emolument which
"I might receive, hurt the child."

"I am ſorry, Sir, it is ſo; but you may
"know ſome gentleman that would under-
"take ſuch a taſk."

"There is a gentleman, who has lived
"for near four years about a ſmall mile
"from this place; his acquaintance with
"me aroſe from his frequenting the church
"I ſerved. His learning is greatly ſupe-
"rior to mine in every reſpect; and he is,
"moreover, an accompliſhed gentleman,
"when he chooſes to ſhew himſelf; but I
"believe he has met with misfortunes in
"life,

"life, which have reduced his fortune,
"ſoured his temper, and thrown a gloom
"and ſeverity round him, that is rather diſ-
"guſting at the firſt ſight. He is now about
"forty; and, if I don't miſtake, he has
"dropped ſome hints, though diſtant ones,
"that he ſhould think it a pleaſure to ſuper-
"intend the education of a young lad of a
"good diſpoſition, as it would ſerve to
"amuſe him, having no wife or family.
"If you pleaſe, I will ſpeak to him on this
"ſubject, and let you know his anſwer;
"and had I a child of my own, I would
"ſooner entruſt him to his care, than any
"other perſon's I know."

Pris thanked him very kindly, and expreſſed her obligations to him; and the next day he was to go on this important buſineſs. Some other converſation ſucceeded to this; and when they returned to the parlour, the conclave was ſtill ſitting, and nearly in the ſame form, ſave that the two

ſiſters had approached ſo cloſe to Mrs. Jefferſon, who ſtill was the principal ſpeaker, that their chairs almoſt touched. Patience was ſo pleaſed with her evening's entertainment, that ſhe preſſed Jefferſon and his wife to ſtay ſupper. Pris joined in the entreaty, and they conſented. We ſhall omit the converſation that paſſed, and haſten to the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

An interview, and the conſequence of it.

THE curate, who failed not to remember his promiſe, went to the gentleman whom he had recommended to Pris, as ſoon as he could in the morning. Mr. Brewer was ſurprized at ſo early and unexpected a viſit: but Jefferſon ſoon explained the cauſe of it. "True," ſaid Brewer, when he had finiſhed, "I have hinted ſome

"ſuch

"ſuch thing, and ſhould not now be diſ-
"pleaſed at the circumſtance; but I muſt
"ſee the boy and his aunt before I give any
"poſitive anſwer." Jefferſon departed; and, in leſs than an hour and a half, he, Frank, and his aunt, were at Brewer's houſe. He received them in ſuch a manner as ſhewed his politeneſs, and the inclination he had to throw off the reſerve contracted in a long ſolitude. He was tall and thin: his face, which had been a good one, was wan and meager; but in his manner there appeared an air and gentility, which beſpoke him fitted for another rank in life than that which he poſſeſſed. His penetrating eyes, in the midſt of an unimportant converſation, were fixed upon Frank; who, on the other hand, regarded him with an equal ſhare of attention, though totally ignorant of the cauſe of his being brought there. At laſt Brewer gave Jefferſon a hint to ſhew the young gentleman the garden; who was

glad of the propoſal; and when they were gone, Mr. Brewer addreſſed Priſcilla.—
"Mr. Jefferſon, Madam, has informed you
"of my ſituation; he alſo has acquainted
"me with yours. It is very true, that it
"would give me infinite pleaſure to have
"a boy of a good diſpoſition with me as
"a companion; I want him to amuſe thoſe
"moments that would otherwiſe be filled
"with tormenting reflections; therefore he
"muſt be good-tempered and docile.
"Were he froward, or illnatured, I could
"not endure the plague and trouble of
"reforming him. Your nephew ſeems,
"in his face, to promiſe fairly to
"be ſuch a one as I wiſh to receive: a
"week's acquaintance with him will let
"me know more of his temper: but even
"ſhould he prove agreeable to me, my
"manner and terms may be diſpleaſing to
"you; I do not mean pecuniary ones.
"The boy to be ſupported is all I require:
"from the moment he comes under my
"roof,

"roof, he is not my pupil, but my ſon.
"A boy of an ingenuous mind will never
"love the man whom he beholds armed
"in all the terrors of the pedagogue; it
"creates fear, a paſſion moſt repugnant to
"love. For that reaſon I ſhall viſit at
"your houſe, and make myſelf acquainted
"with him: in a week I ſhall know him
"ſufficiently to enable me to form a judge-
"ment of him. But if he is entruſted to
"my care, I muſt ſtipulate this one con-
"dition, that no authority or power ſhall
"remain with you to contradict or oppoſe
"my methods: I muſt have abſolute do-
"minion over him. When I abuſe this
"truſt, it is in your power to deprive me
"of it. And the moment you pretend to
"controul me, I give him up for ever.
"You may think me whimſical, Madam,
"but I could not endure to ſee thoſe prin-
"ciples, which I might have been labour-
"ing to eſtabliſh for a long time, all de-

"ſtroyed in a moment, by an abſurd in-
"dulgence, or a deſtructive fondneſs."

Pris promiſed an exact obedience to the terms he preſcribed, and hinted that his appointment ſhould be as he pleaſed himſelf. "I have once already told you, Ma-
"dam, that it is not the hope or wiſh of
"reward that induces me to ſuperintend
"the education of your nephew. It is
"very true I have met with misfortunes,
"and am unhappy," (Pris now liked him more than ſhe did before) "but I can
"maintain myſelf, though I cannot ſup-
"port the additional expence of the boy;
"it is from other motives I undertake this
"office. I am detached from the world:
"nothing ſhall recall or oblige me to enter
"into the buſy ſcenes of life again; but
"it would give my heart a ſecret pride to
"ſee this lad, educated under my care,
"enter into life with applauſe, and per-
"form his career with honour to himſelf;
"and would rather ſee him a good citizen

"of

" of the world, than a pedantic ſcholar, or " a rich fool."

" Well, Sir," replied Pris, " I will take " care that you ſhall be properly ſettled, " whatever your motives may be; and I " have no doubt but my Frank will be " every thing you wiſh to ſee him. Will " you do me the favour to take the vacant " ſeat in our coach, and dine with us?"

He accepted the invitation; and left Pris while he dreſſed. He did not detain her long, for his habit was plain; and recommending it both to the aunt and the curate, not to mention the ſituation he was to appear in hereafter to the boy, he accompanied them to their houſe. Frank gained upon him every day, and he reciprocally on the boy. He had not viſited at the houſe above four or five times, when an accident determined Brewer's choice.

Frank had not been viſible ſince dinner, and it now approached tea-time. The ſeveral enquiries of the ſervants gave no ſatisfaction;

tisfaction; all they knew was, that he went out, and every body knew that he was not returned again. They began to be uneaſy, for he had never been ſo long abſent ſince he left the country. Various were the ſpeculations on this occaſion. The moſt probable cauſe why he abſented himſelf was, that he had ſtrolled too far, and had loſt his way. Patience began to relate an horrid dream ſhe had, and concluded that ſome accident had befallen the boy. "I "dreamed of a naked child in the mud, "and that is always a ſure ſign of death," ſaid ſhe. Prudence expreſſed her impatience for the coffee to be brought in, and poſitively declaring ſhe ſhould be able to tell what was become of him, immediately began to give Brewer, who was walking about the room with anxiety and impatience ſtrongly imprinted in his countenance, innumerable inſtances of the infallibility of her prognoſtications, and aſſured him of the great certainty of the ſcience.

His

His politeneſs would not ſuffer him to contradict her, neither was he in a humour to enter into any argument to convince her of the abſurdity of believing in ſuch things: he therefore let her go on uninterrupted, and paid very little attention to her, or Patience, who reminded her ſiſter of ſeveral circumſtances which ſhe had forgotten. Priſcilla, who loved Frank better than her ſiſters did their favourite opinions, began to grow extremely uneaſy; the tears filled her eyes, and ſhe ſat in a ſilent ſtate of apprehenſive dejection. This was the diſpoſition in the parlour; but in this ſtate things were not ſuffered long to remain. A great crowd of people came to the door. "Somebody is hurt," ſaid Brewer, getting a glance at the people, "and he is brought "here."

"My Frank is dead!" cried Pris, haſtening to the door.

"I thought my dream would come out "true," ſaid Patience, complimenting her own

own ſagacity. Brewer waited not to hear the remainder of her ſpeech, for ſhe ſtill kept talking, but flew to ſee the cauſe of the tumult. His apprehenſions about Frank's ſafety were ſoon at an end, when he ſaw him aſſiſting a young man genteely dreſſed, but whoſe face and head were covered with blood, and calling to the ſervants to help him in. Brewer ſoon lent an hand, and they got him into the houſe; and ſeating him in an arm-chair in the breakfaſting parlour, ſent immediately for a ſurgeon. As he was ſenſeleſs, ſeveral applications were made to reſtore him; and we muſt do juſtice to Prudence's balſamic cordial, which was of the greateſt ſervice upon this occaſion. In the mean time his head was waſhed, Brewer and Prudence aſſiſting, and a large wound appeared on the ſide of it: but as their ſkill in ſurgery did not extend very far, it was impoſſible for them to know whether the ſkull was fractured or not. Frank, aſſiſting the in-

valid

valid as far as in his power, was called out by the ſervants, to ſatisfy the two men at the door, who had brought the gentleman to their houſe. He had promiſed to reward them liberally for their aſſiſtance, but unfortunately he was without an halfpenny. Recourſe was had to his aunt, who ſatisfied them, though ſhe was not ſo liberal as her nephew would have been; not but theſe poor fellows would have aſſiſted any body, who was in that condition, without any hope of recompence; yet, when there was a promiſe of reward, they could not be ſo deaf to the ſuggeſtions of intereſt as to refuſe it. The ſurgeon came, and gave it as his opinion that the ſcull was not fractured; but the wound might be attended with a fever, as there was a great contuſion, and his patient was very weak through loſs of blood: he therefore deſired he might be kept as quiet as poſſible, and ordered him to bed. As Frank's bed was neareſt, he was laid there; and when the

ſurgeon

ſurgeon was diſmiſſed, they began to enquire where he had found this wounded gentleman. Frank ſaid, that he had ſeen him in the road, while he was endeavouring to find his way home, as he had ſtrayed beyond his knowledge, and imagined him to be drunk, as he could not ſit ſtrait in the ſaddle; that he ran as faſt as ever he could after the horſe, and at laſt, that the gentleman fell off, and the horſe ran away, and that he called theſe men to help him home with him.

"Ah," ſaid Pate, "the drunken beaſt "was not capable of taking care of him-"ſelf."

"Then, aunt," returned Frank, "he "was in more need of our aſſiſtance."

Pris heard this reply with heart-felt ſatisfaction; and caſting a look of joy towards him, aſked why he came to borrow money from her to pay the men that brought him home? "You know, child, "you had five ſhillings in your pocket this "morning,

" morning, what have you done with them?
" How came you by thoſe ſhoes you have
" on?" And indeed Frank's feet cut no reſpectable figure, for his toes appeared very plainly at an aperture in one of the ſhoes he then wore, if they could, with any propriety, be called ſhoes; the other was cut all down the ſide, and had the advantage of many pieces: they were like Merry Andrew's ſlippers, which had neither heel, ſole, or upper-leather.

Frank bluſhed, and caſt his eyes towards his feet: he remained ſilent.

" Why won't you tell me, my dear?" ſaid Pris.

" I ſuppoſe," ſaid Prue, " he has been
" playing among ſome black-guard boys,
" and has loſt them."

" Indeed I have not," replied he, " but
" don't aſk me about them."

" Aye, aye," ſaid Pate, " it is as his
" aunt has ſaid; he has changed them, or
" played them away."

" I have

"I have not, indeed."

"What have you done with them, "then?"

"Why, I gave them away."

"To whom?"

"When I loſt my way," ſaid Frank, "I "went into a little houſe that I ſaw, and "aſked my way; and there was a poor "woman, and ſhe had four children, and "ſhe was crying; and ſo I aſked her what "was the matter, and ſhe would not tell "me; and every thing was ſo clean about "the place that I pitied her, and wanted to "know what ailed her; and at laſt ſhe "told me, that her huſband was a labour-"ing man, but had been ſick and confined "to his bed above a fortnight, and they "had no money, and were afraid he would "die; ſo I gave her all the money I had, "and told her, when my aunt gave me "more, ſhe ſhould have it. She was afraid "to take it, but I made her; and then the "eldeſt of the boys was to ſhew me the

"way

"way home, that I might find out their "houſe again; ſo in coming over the fields "I gave him my ſhoes, and took his; for "he is obliged to go about for his ſick fa- "ther: and then he ſhewed me how I was "to go home; and then I ſaw this gentle- "man fall from his horſe; and that's all."

"Well, my dear," ſaid Pris, "and "what need you be aſhamed of telling us "what you did: you acted very well in "relieving the ſick and the poor."

"Yes," added Prue, "but it might not "be an object of charity; and beſides, "there may be a deſign in the woman to "wheedle the child out of his money; but "he had no occaſion to give his ſhoes "away."

"Indeed I had, aunt," ſaid Frank, "for "the poor boy had none to wear, and I "have two pair more at home here; and "I'd rather wear theſe and ſtay at home, "than not give the poor boy a pair of "ſhoes."

"Don't

"Don't be ſaucy, Frank," ſaid Patience.

Pris would not let her go on; but interrupted her, by aſking Frank what they ſhould do; for, as they were not ſettled, there was no bed but his for the ſick ſtranger to lie in, and he could not ſleep with him.

"Then I will ſit up, and watch him," ſaid he; "for he wants ſleep more than I "do; beſides he is ſick, and I am well."

"No, no, Frank," ſaid Pris, "we will "contrive that one of the ſervants ſhall ſit "up with your patient."

"And Frank may ſleep with me," ſaid Brewer, whoſe heart warmed towards him, "if he chuſes a walk at night."

Frank jumped at the propoſal; and, ſupping early, they ſet off together for Brewer's houſe. He had a ſpare bed in which he put Frank, who, heartily tired with the exploits of the day, ſlept ſoundly. Riſing early in the morning, Brewer aſked him where he intended to go. "Home,"

ſaid

ſaid he, "to ſee how my patient does, as "my aunt calls him."

"It is too ſoon to diſturb him yet: but "ſuppoſe we go and ſee how the poor la- "bourer and his family are?"

"Ah," ſaid Frank, with a melancholy face, "I have no money, and I promiſed "to give them ſome the next time I went, "and my aunt won't give me any till next "week."

"Never mind that, Frank; we'll con- "trive to give them ſome aſſiſtance. Do "you know the way?"

This puzzled him: but he ſaid he would endeavour to find it out. And while they are loſing their way, we ſhall carry the reader back again to the Miſs Kingley's, where our friends Brewer and Frank left them ſeated round the table, after ſupper, the preceding night.

CHAP-

CHAPTER X.

Which relates ſeveral good maxims, proper to be put in practice in the education of children.

THE reader is already informed, that the moſt material points, in relation to the family, were ſettled after ſupper.—The cuſtom was not broken through on this night. The three ſiſters were perched on their elbows at convenient diſtances from each other, and had, for about five minutes, obſerved a moſt profound ſilence, which was a wonderful exertion of the taciturn powers in women, all of whom, to tell the truth of them, were rather addicted to loquacity. "Well," quoth Patience, breaking ſilence, "do not you think that "Frank is bringing a fine expence on us? "What are we to do with this ſick man? "Who knows what he is? And ſuppoſe "he was to die, what would become of "us?"

"Aye,"

"Aye," added Prue, "and who is to "pay the ſurgeon? I will engage he won't "viſit and attend this wounded man for "nothing; and as we ſent for him, he will "make us pay him."

"The expence cannot be a great deal," replied Pris; "and ſo far from blaming "Frank, I commend and applaud his ge-"neroſity and humanity. A boy of his "age may pity a perſon in diſtreſs, but it "is not every one would relieve him: be-"ſides, he only puts in practice the golden "rule of doing as you would be done by."

"Very pretty truly," replies Patience; "and ſo our houſe is to be made an hoſpi-"tal of, becauſe your nephew chuſes to "bring all the lame and the blind, and ſick "people he meets with, into it. No, I "will not allow it."

"Nay," ſaid Pris, "this is his firſt "tranſgreſſion, if you think it ſuch; I "confeſs I am of another way of thinking: "but I will pay all this expence myſelf,

" and then there can be no fault found " with him."

" No, no," ſaid Patience, " I did not " mean that; but you ſhould teach the " boy not to be ſo fond of throwing away " his money upon you know not whom, " or what: you ſhould not let him have " any, and then he will know the want " and the value of it. And there's this " Mr. Brewer, he is a queer ſort of a man, " and as bad as Frank, I believe; for he " did not correct the boy, as he ought to " have done, for giving away his ſhoes, " and playing ſuch tricks: but I will ſpeak " to him to reprimand him; for if he goes " on in this way he will be a beggar, and " all his fortune will be given among people " in the highway."

" There was 'Squire Thickſet that lived " by us, ſiſter," adds Prue; " he was a " man of near three thouſand a year, and " yet there were no poor people or ſick " men, or beggars in his houſe, or about

" it;

"it; no; and the ſervants were turned "away, if ever they gave any thing to "them; and the great dog knew a beggar "as well as could be, and if they came "near the houſe, always flew at them; "yet I do not ſee that the 'Squire was a "bit the worſe liked, and I am ſure he "was very rich; therefore, ſiſter, this "boy, who is a young fool, ſhould be "better inſtructed; and Mr. Brewer ſhould "teach him to deſpiſe thoſe people.— "Now, if he had bought any valuable "thing with the money, I ſhould not have "cared: but he might as well have thrown "it into the river."

Pris defended the boy as long as ſhe could, and urged every motive, human and divine: but nothing could convince her ſiſters.

"To be ſure," ſaid one, "if a relation "was ſick, one ſhould attend them."

"The parſons," ſaid the other, "tho' "they preach ſo much about charity and

" good works, ſeldom practiſe 'em: and all
" theſe notions ought to be whipped out of
" Frank: and as Mr. Brewer is a very
" good man, I hope he will not *ſpoil the*
" *child and ſpare the rod*; I am ſure he is a
" ſenſible man, for he praiſed my cordial
" very much."

And here we cannot help ſaying, that though the wiſdom of Solomon is very conſpicuous in the above quoted maxim, yet there never was one that has been more twiſted and perverted from its original intention, to the great diſcomfiture of many a poor child's poſteriors, than this very one. Vices which children imbibe from the miſtaken indulgence of their parents, and for which, in their tendereſt years, they are even applauded, as ſoon as they grow up, theſe become too notorious to be paſſed over; and the pedagogue has recourſe to birch, to allay the evil ſpirit that was originally raiſed by the parent. Upon theſe occaſions, there ſhould be a law enacted,

acted, that, upon ſufficient proof of the child's bad behaviour and proneneſs to vice, and that it was cauſed and occaſioned by a fooliſhly fond father, or a mother that will ſee no fault in her own children, and their having aided, abetted, and comforted them in the commiſſion of thoſe miſdemeanours, then proper puniſhment ſhould be inflicted upon them, and the child weaned from thoſe bad habits with the greateſt care. At preſent, the tutors miſtake the offenders, and literally viſit the ſins of the fathers upon their children. Pris could not coincide with her ſiſters, and they all went to bed.

It is time now to return to Brewer and Frank, who were puzzling themſelves to find out the cottage: at laſt they ſucceeded. The joy, which was viſible in all their faces, the ſick man's not excepted, convinced Brewer that every thing Frank had ſaid was true. "He is a little angel," ſaid the afflicted wife.

"Ah! indeed," replied Frank, "my "aunt has given me no more money, or "you ſhould have it."

"I do not want it," ſaid ſhe.

Brewer began to make enquiries concerning her ſituation; and recommending it to her huſband to keep up his ſpirits, left a guinea with him, and departed. They arrived at the aunt's houſe before the family was up; and while they were aſking queſtions concerning Frank's patient, the ſurgeon came to viſit him. He had a good night, was wonderouſly recovered, and complained of nothing more than the pain and ſoreneſs of his head. That was in a fair way of healing; and in a dreſſing or two more he was able to remove himſelf; but he made many apologies to the ladies, and lamented, in ſo polite a manner, the trouble he had occaſioned, that they repented not of their civilities to him. He informed them he was the ſon of a clergyman who had a living in a diſtant part of England;

England; that he was of the univerſity of Oxford, and was alſo intended for orders; but coming to London on a party of pleaſure with ſome of his friends, unknown to his father, he was induced to drink more than he ought, and this cataſtrophe was the conſequence of it. He reproached himſelf for his intemperance, as it cauſed them ſo much trouble and inconvenience, and obſerved, the accident he had met with, was but a juſt puniſhment for his offence. To his benefactor, little Frank, he was very profuſe and earneſt in his profeſſions of eternal gratitude, and vows of friendſhip; and told him, that he ſhould ever find him devoted to his ſervice. He departed with reluctance from his young friend, when the ſurgeon told him he might travel with ſafety; and promiſed to write to him. When he arrived at Oxford, they received a letter from Mr. Harriſon, again repeating his acknowledgements.

CHAPTER XI.

The history of BREWER.

THE fondneſs that Brewer had for Frank, gave his aunt no room to imagine that he would refuſe the care of her nephew; and in this ſhe was not deceived: for when ſhe aſked him his opinion of the boy, he declared him ſuperior to his hopes and wiſhes, and that he was willing to do him every ſervice in his power. Pris then told him what Frank's paternal eſtate was, and how ſituated; and that ſhe was determined to expend it principally in his education; therefore ſhe inſiſted on his acceptance of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, to ſupport his extraordinary expences, and twenty pounds a year ſhe intended to allow Frank for his own pocket, and the remaining fifty pounds ſhe ſuppoſed would find him in cloaths. This was her ſcheme, and no alteration in it would ſhe admit of. Brewer was obliged

to

to acquieſce, and Frank was conſigned to his care. While he is making ſtudy a diverſion and amuſement, rather than a toil to his pupil, whoſe capacity was equal to any taſk, it is neceſſary to inform the reader of ſome particulars concerning him, which it is to be ſuppoſed he is deſirous to know.

Brewer was the ſon of a gentleman who had originally a good fortune, but by extravagance reduced it to a fourth of its amount. "It is happy enough," ſays Shenſtone, "that the ſame vices which "impair one's fortune, frequently ruin our "conſtitution, that the one may not ſur-"vive the other." This was the caſe with this gentleman; who, when he found himſelf obliged to live on three hundred pounds a year, hardly wiſhed to enjoy any more, at leaſt he was incapable of doing it. By the time his only ſon was prepared to go to the univerſity, he died, and left him the remains of his ſhattered fortune. Young Brewer went through the academical courſe

with great *eclat*. Though his acquired talents created admiration and reſpect, yet, in the opinion of his fellow ſtudents, his notions of things in life, were very narrow and confined; and he was rather ridiculous in his manners. He preferred relieving the diſtreſſes of a ſtranger, to ſpending his money in a party of pleaſure. He had been known to have ſupported a widow who had a ſweet pretty daughter, and with whom he was on the greateſt footing of intimacy, without debauching the girl. Theſe actions, and ſome fooliſh vindications of the characters of women whom he was a ſtranger to, but whom general fame ſpoke well of, in contradiction to the boaſts of ſome of his companions, gained him the title of being a damn'd fool; but, at the ſame time, it was allowed, that he was a very ſenſible fellow. Brewer, when of age and in poſſeſſion of his little fortune, found not the leaſt inclination to enter into any profeſſion: whether it was, that he had

expectations

expectations from a nobleman who was educated in the ſame college with him, and who promiſed to procure him a place, that ſhould be a ſinecure, and leave him at liberty to purſue his inclination, which led him to the ſtudy of the *Belle Lettres*; or from what other cauſe we know not, but he refuſed to attach himſelf to any particular profeſſion, though his friends often teazed him about it. At laſt, his noble friend performed his promiſe, and obtained a place of about three hundred pounds a year for him. This gave him eaſe, and he was independent; but though his expences were ſmall, yet the benevolence of his heart and his humanity, prevented his laying by much of his income: and indeed his philanthropy, which never ſuffered him to diſtinguiſh between objects in diſtreſs, often led him to beſtow his money upon thoſe who were very little deſerving of it; but he frequently uſed to obſerve, that he had rather be miſtaken in

his deſire to relieve nine undeſerving perſons, ſo that he really contributed to the peace or happineſs of the tenth, who truly deſerved it: he could not help being impoſed on, and it was in their own boſoms whether they miſrepreſented matters or not. He lived for near five years in a ſtate of celibacy, happy and diſengaged from any particular object: but the hour was approaching, in which he was doomed to experience more unhappineſs than ever he had known.

As he delighted much in walking, and was very active, he frequently, when his leiſure permitted, took long walks into the country: in one of theſe, about twenty miles from London, he was overtaken by a violent ſtorm: he perceived it coming, and, ſeeing no ſhelter near him, ran over the common where he was, to a little and the only houſe he could obſerve all round. The door was opened to him in the moſt hoſpitable manner; and the good lady of

the

the manſion, who had paſſed the meridian of her life, aſſiſted in drying and relieving him. Thoroughly wetted as he was, it required ſome time, and a large fire, to reſtore him to his former ſtate: that was not wanting; and a cordial which ſhe gave him kept the wet from penetrating. When he was properly dried and refreſhed, he was preparing to take his leave, not without returning her many thanks, and making a proper acknowledgement to the maid-ſervant who had aſſiſted him; but Mrs. Alton inſiſted upon his ſtaying to tea with her and her daughter. He ſuffered himſelf to be prevailed upon, and Miſs Alton was called down ſtairs to preſide at the tea-table. The firſt ſight of her ſtruck poor Brewer ſo, that he could hardly ſtammer out his compliment to her. Her ſhape was exquiſitely fine; her face was good; and, though not a regular beauty, ſhe might, with great propriety and juſtice, be called handſome. But the neatneſs of her

her dreſs, and the modeſty of her deportment, charmed him more than any thing elſe. As he entered into converſation with her, he perceived a delicacy that completed the conqueſt. Brewer, though he had never been in ſuch a ſituation before, knew immediately the cauſe of it; and determined to marry her, if ſhe ſhould turn out as agreeable to him upon proper enquiries, as ſhe was at firſt ſight. Mrs. Alton and he maintained the converſation principally; nevertheleſs, he ſeized frequent opportunities of addreſſing himſelf to the young lady, and took a pride in giving her an opportunity to explain her ſentiments.—Mrs. Alton could not help obſerving the great effect her daughter's charms had on the ſtranger; and as his demeanour and language ſpoke him a gentleman, ſhe did not diſcourage it: he gave an hint, *en paſſant*, of his having a place, and this was attended to with much pleaſure by the mother: and when, in going away, he

aſked

aſked permiſſion to viſit her again, ſhe told him ſhe ſhould always be glad to ſee him, and expreſſed a wiſh that he would return ſoon. This invitation was by no means unwelcome to Brewer: he promiſed to take the ſpeedieſt opportunity of calling on them, and was as good as his word. Mrs. Alton and her daughter expreſſed great pleaſure at ſeeing him. He went there often, and was always well received. In the courſe of his viſits he learned, that Mrs. Alton was the widow of an officer, and upon her penſion, a ſmall allowance from her friends, and the profits ariſing from the ſale of her daughter's work, ſhe ſupported herſelf with decency: that they ſaw little company, as they could not afford it, and it would take up the daughter's time too much. Brewer, who ſaw the great regularity and neatneſs with which every thing was conducted, and the frugality and œconomy of the houſe, thought, if the lady would conſent, that he could

not

not make a better choice; concluding, her education would make amends for her want of fortune, and ſave him one by her management in domeſtic affairs. He therefore explain'd himſelf to the mother, and inform'd her of his ſituation in life; and concluded with aſking her permiſſion to addreſs her daughter. Mrs. Alton had no objection, but their being as yet entire ſtrangers to each other. This was ſoon obviated, for Brewer became a frequent viſitor. The young lady, though reſerv'd, ſhew'd,

She wou'd be woo'd, and not unſought be won;

And, in a proper time, ſhe liſtened with patience to his vows, and in a twelvemonth conſented to become Mrs. Brewer. He accordingly furniſhed an houſe for his bride, and brought her and her mother home with him.

For three years he lived as happily as man could wiſh; and, in that time, his wife

wife preſented him with a fine boy and girl. His fondneſs increaſed for the amiable mother of thoſe children, who ſeemed to be only pledges of their mutual affection. He lived with a genteel frugality; and Mrs. Alton, by his wife's deſire, inſpected the houſehold concerns. The firſt interruption to the peace he had ſo long enjoyed, was the death of the old lady. He lamented her ſincerely, for ſhe was a worthy woman. Time convinced him, that he had more occaſion to grieve for her than he imagined. His wife began to be more engaged abroad than formerly: his affairs at home were not managed ſo prudently as heretofore; and he perceived a change that was far from being pleaſing to him: however, he was ſilent. Mrs. Brewer entered into parties at play; and being young and unſkilful, was always a loſer. Her demands for money to pay the debts ſhe had contracted, became very frequent. Brewer, who loved her to diſtraction, never reproached her: he was

contented

contented with talking at her before a friend, and ſhewed how eaſily ſhe might be impoſed upon. The death of her two children did not prevent her continuing the ſame courſe: money muſt be had, and Brewer found himſelf involved in debt, before he knew where he was. Even then he could only bring himſelf to hint at the impropriety of her conduct. She was reſolved not to take hints; and, with unceaſing perſeverance and obſtinacy, purſued the bent of her inclinations. Brewer had been deceived by that appearance of mildneſs, good humour, and regularity, which ſhe ſeemed poſſeſſed of, and in the practice of which ſhe was forced to continue while her mother was living; but now ſhe threw off the maſk, and appeared in her proper character, froward, haughty, and extravagant; ſhe was no longer the tender wife of an affectionate huſband: nor could all Brewer's blandiſhments or fondneſs make her return to the path ſhe had quitted.

ted. Embarraſſed in his affairs by her miſconduct, and unhappy at home, he ſought refuge abroad. It was lighting the candle at both ends, and his ſubſtance was conſumed inſenſibly. As yet he believed his honour ſafe, and, though imprudent as his wife was, he did not imagine her criminal. But in this he was deceived: for a young fellow, whom ſhe had hired as a footman, had invaded his maſter's bed, though not without her invitation; and this commerce was ſo public, that the other ſervants were well acquainted with it, and their regard for their maſter only prevented their informing him of it; for he was beloved in a high degree by them all. Accident at laſt revealed the fatal ſecret, and betrayed the infamous intimacy that ſubſiſted between them. The grief and anguiſh that ſeized his heart were inexpreſſible. He could not vent his pain; it preyed upon his ſpirits, and threw him into a fever that had nearly coſt him his life. He had not,

however,

however, the mortification of ſeeing her frequently about him. He had ſervants enough, ſhe thought, to attend him, and ſhe left them to do their duty. The goodneſs of his conſtitution got the better of his diſorder, and he recovered. His greateſt concern, when he found his health re-eſtabliſhed, was, how he ſhould part with his wife, with whom he determined never more to cohabit. The firſt thing he did was, to ſell part of his eſtate to pay off his creditors. The next, unable to bear the reproaches and ſneers of the world, which are, unjuſtly, in ſuch caſes as theſe, beſtowed on the injured party, he reſolved to leave the town; and, in conſequence of that determination, he went and reſigned his place into the hands of his noble patron. He had now but little left; not above one hundred and forty pounds a year. His wife ſtill remained. He had as yet never ſpoke to her; and though he had full evidence of her being guilty of a breach of

her

her matrimonial contract, yet, being unwilling to expoſe himſelf to the world, he forbore to ſue for a divorce. He came into her dreſſing-room one morning, and, ſitting down by her, deſired ſhe might diſmiſs her attendant; as he had matters of the moſt private and important nature to communicate to her. He had never addreſſed her ſo ſeriouſly before, nor had ſhe ever ſeen ſuch a ſternneſs either in his ſpeech or manner. She dreaded the interview; and, with a faltering voice, bade her maid retire. Her conſcience warned her of the approaching ſtorm. "Mrs. Brewer," ſaid he, "we have lived together now ſome-
"what above eight years, great part of
"which time I have paſſed in happineſs
"and peace. That is now all over: you
"have deſtroyed it all. Nay, liſten to me
"patiently" (ſhe was beginning to ſpeak)
"for I will be heard. Your extravagance,
"and fondneſs for play, where you were
"always a dupe, led you into ſuch ex-
"ceſſes

" ceſſes as have ruined me. To pay the
" debts which you were the means of my
" contracting, I have ſold one hundred and
" ſixty pounds a year of my eſtate. The
" laſt act you have committed, and which
" is more atrocious than any of the others,
" is the criminal correſpondence you main-
" tain with my ſervant in my houſe. To
" avoid being witneſs to my own ſhame,
" and to eſcape from the ſcorn of the ma-
" licious and ill-natured, I am determined
" to leave London: for that purpoſe I have
" reſigned my place, and have advertiſed
" my houſe and furniture to be ſold; there-
" fore you know the worſt that can happen
" to you. But I will have more compaſſion
" on you, however undeſerving, than to
" expoſe you in a publick court of juſtice.
" We here part for ever. I will allow you
" fifty pounds a year for life: and you
" muſt ſign an agreement which I have or-
" dered my lawyer to draw up, and which
" he waits with in my ſtudy, to know

" whether

"whether you will execute, or not. If "you do not, I muſt proceed to be di- "vorced from you. This I would wiſh to "avoid, if poſſible. I give you fifteen "minutes to conſider of this: you are "miſtreſs of all thoſe trinkets my fooliſh "fondneſs laviſhed on you in the days of "my affection, and your innocence: they "are both paſt now; and all the comfort "I have under theſe misfortunes is, that I "have no child to be a witneſs of a mo- "ther's ſhame, and a father's grief." She fell on her knees before him as he ceaſed ſpeaking. Tears and ſobs choaked her utterance. At laſt ſhe found vent for words. In the moſt ſupplicating terms ſhe beſought him to reſtore her to the place ſhe formerly held in his heart; confeſſed her crime, and her abhorrence of it; aſ- ſured him that ſhe would live in a cottage with him. He interrupted her, "Madam, "it muſt not be. My reſolution, my un- "alterable reſolution is taken; I will never

"recede:

"recede: and you are only waſting that "time in unavailing and ineffectual en- "treaties, that ſhould be employed in "conſidering what courſe you ſhould "take."

"That is already fixed," ſaid ſhe.— "Much obliged as I have been to you, I "will ſtill be more indebted to your good- "neſs. Order the lawyer to come in, I "will execute any agreement you pleaſe "to make. The worſt would be too good "for me."

She conſented to a ſeparation, and he did as he promiſed her. He ſold his houſe and furniture, except a few articles which he kept to furniſh the little houſe where he then lived, and which had been in his poſ- ſeſſion above four years. As his grief was not ſo violent as to expend itſelf in the firſt diſcovery of his unhappineſs, it had a worſe effect; and he remained in a ſtate of de- jection and melancholy for a long time. His books were his only companions: and

he

he wiſhed, if poſſible, to detach himſelf from a world which he hated. At length his ſorrow began to abate, and he ventured by degrees into that ſociety he had ſo long quitted; but he preſcribed himſelf certain bounds, beyond which he never went. At this time he was introduced to our reader: and this was the man to whom Frank was committed for his education.

CHAPTER XII.

The quick lapſe of time. Continuation of WILLS's *hiſtory.*

WHILE our reader is amuſing himſelf with the hiſtory of Brewer, we ſhall take it as a great favour if he will imagine eight years are elapſed while he was reading it. And in this we differ not from our fellow biographers, who frequently ſkip over that ſpace of time without making any ſort of apology for it: but

modeſty would not ſuffer us to adopt ſuch a practice. And in that time, if he pleaſes, he may divert himſelf with imagining how many hours a day Wills ſpent in reading Greek and Latin; how many in aſtronomy and mathematics; and ſo may go on with the whole courſe. All we ſhall ſay about the matter is, that he took as much pleaſure in learning, as Brewer did in teaching him; and his aunt was ſo ſenſible of the benefits her nephew had received from him, that ſhe could not make acknowledgements enough. And in this time it is neceſſary to inform the reader, who ſhould be acquainted with every particular relating to the family, that the eldeſt ſiſter of the three paid the tribute to nature, and left all her fortune between her two remaining ſiſters. Frank, as he grew up, loſt none of his comelineſs; and as he approached manhood, being now near nineteen, his ſhape had apparently and really ſtrength and beauty united in it. Brewer, who was

active

active himself through temperance and exercise, always encouraged Wills in feats of agility. Not a young man on the common where he lived could out-run him; none leaped so far; and few could pitch a bar beyond him. Brewer was his companion in all these exercises: and if he loved Frank with all the affection of the parent, Wills felt as much love for him as his child could; it was gratitude in the youth. "To you," he would say, "I am indebted "for that knowledge which enables me to "hold an honourable rank in the creation: "that teaches me to pity honest ignorance, "and despise foolish presumption: that "gives me power to distinguish between "good and evil, and to chuse that which "is right."

"But," said Brewer, "your knowledge "is yet confined in a small compass: it is "not in the study of books you will get "that knowledge which will be most use-"ful to you hereafter; it is in the world

" you muſt learn what the world is; and
" from men themſelves, you muſt ſtudy
" men. Let us quit this ſedentary life
" now, and go abroad. We will take a
" tour, and in it receive a practical leſſon.
" We will viſit ſome part of England. You
" are young, and I am healthy: we will
" not be confined in a carriage, but make
" uſe of our legs; we ſhall enjoy our own
" time, and be enabled to make our ob-
" ſervations more at leiſure. We will go
" into the country firſt; for there you will
" ſee nature leſs diſguiſed than in the city,
" where it will be difficult for you to un-
" ravel, at once, the almoſt inextricable
" clue of villany. You will ſee the ſame
" ſchemes put in practice, though not in ſo
" great a degree. Hypocriſy, ambition,
" and pride, are as much exerciſed in a
" country village, as in a court; though
" with infinitely leſs dangerous effects. But
" we ſhall receive a greater benefit; we
" ſhall be able to inſpect the different ma-
" nufactories

"nufactories in the towns we ſhall paſs "through; and, as you will no doubt "hereafter be in poſſeſſion of the fortune "of your family, you will ſeek a place in "the ſenate, then the knowledge you may "acquire in this little journey will be of "more ſervice to you and your conſti-"tuents, than half a dozen tours to Italy "or France. What can be more abſurd, "than to ſuppoſe a man talking of regu-"lating our woollen manufactory, who "never ſaw any preparation for making a "piece of cloth, or who perhaps never "wears any thing but French ſilks? Yet "ſuch are ſome of our legiſlators; nor "could all the clothiers in England make "them underſtand how a piece of cloth is "made, if they do not ſee it themſelves. "Not that I would inſinuate, that it is re-"quiſite that you ſhould be an artificer: it "is ſufficient that you ſhould be acquaint-"ed with the method of doing it; and "you will find hereafter that the moſt tri-

" fling piece of knowledge you may pick " up by chance, may, at ſome time or " other, prove of the greateſt utility."

Frank heard and approved the ſcheme: and the next day they ſet out. The firſt knowledge a man ſhould acquire who travels, is that of his own country: but as he can ſee that every day, and with very little trouble, it is not worth looking at: and it is not to be doubted, that a tour through England, with a ſenſible man, would be of more ſervice to our countrymen, than galloping through Europe under the tuition of a Swiſs bear-leader, and all that they can ſay of themſelves, when they return, is, that

" Europe they ſaw, and Europe ſaw them too!

It was in the courſe of theſe perambulations that Brewer communicated his hiſtory to his dear Frank, who ſympathized with him in all his ſorrows. As their deſign was to improve themſelves, they made no great

great haſte; but ſtaid to inform themſelves of every thing worthy notice. The adventures they met with in their walks, are not ſufficiently intereſting to obtain a place here. Suffice it to ſay, that they went through the greateſt part of England in this manner, and learned every thing that was worthy the inſpection of the curious; and near two years were taken up in theſe periodical journeys. Frank now approached his one-and-twentieth year; and the next tour the friends propoſed taking, was through the metropolis: and previous to this undertaking, Brewer had fortified the mind of his pupil with the moſt wholeſome advice. But as they were preparing to put their ſcheme in execution, Brewer was ſuddenly taken ill. It generally happens that a ſtrong, hale man ſeldom recovers from a violent illneſs, that a Valetudinarian thinks nothing of. The willow, bending to the ſtorm, eſcapes its fury; while the oak, that oppoſes it, is rent in pieces.

So it fared with poor Brewer: for Wills had the inexpreſſible anguiſh to ſee him expire in his arms on the third day after he was taken ill. He had attended him from the moment he ſickened; nor would he be perſuaded to leave him. He hardly left his cold remains till he ſaw them interred; and after pouring forth the tear of gratitude and affection on his grave, he returned to his aunt's, in a ſtate of dejection, that would have excited pity from the moſt obdurate heart.

CHAPTER XIII.

WILLS *conſoled. Another death. A change in the family.*

AS this was the firſt misfortune in life that Wills had really felt the force of, he was the more ſuſceptible of its weight: it hung heavy on his mind, unaccuſtomed to bear the load of miſery. Grievous

vous was the loſs to him, and bitterly he lamented it. Nor did he omit, for a long time, viſiting the place of his friend's interment, and ſighing at the remembrance of his loſs. His grief at laſt began to abate; and the preparations for his birth-day, when he was to quit his minority, ſerved to amuſe him. On that day he firſt forſook the mourning habit he had aſſumed for his friend. In the morning his aunt Pris called him into her cloſet. "My dear "Frank," ſaid ſhe, embracing him, "this "I ſhall eſteem one of the happieſt days in my "life, that has afforded me the pleaſure of "ſeeing you arrived at man's eſtate, and ſo "worthy of my affection as you are. But "though, through the miſtaken avarice of "your grandfather, and the misfortune of "your father, they have left you nothing "but a name; yet I am very much re-"joiced to think, through my means, you "may be reſtored to the inheritance of "your fathers. Here, Frank," added ſhe,

"here are the deeds of your paternal "eſtate: it will ſupport you till ſomething "better is provided for you, and may you "live long and happily to enjoy it. But "do not imagine that I mean to ſend you "away from this houſe; no, it ſhall be "always yours."

"I ſhould have interrupted you before "now, Madam, if my ſurprize and gratitude "had permitted me. Obliged as I have "been to you ſince the hour of my birth, "as I may ſay, this laſt act of generoſity, "tho' it correſponds with your former beha-"viour, has exceeded my hopes: but you, "by rendering me independent, have only "attached my heart to you by cloſer ties; "and may the hour that I ceaſe to ho-"nour and revere you be the laſt of my "life."

"No acknowledgements or thanks, Frank; "I want none.—I am convinced of your "gratitude, and am aſſured of your love. "Enough of that. I have invited many

"friends

"friends here to celebrate your birth-day. "There will be ſeveral girls here. Look "at them: there may be one among them "who may have charms ſufficient to fix "your inclinations. I wiſh to ſee you "married and ſettled, but I wiſh to ſee you "happy: therefore your choice ſhall be "free. Only I want you to make a choice."

Wills promiſed every thing ſhe required; informing her, at the ſame time, he never had any paſſion for a particular woman; yet would examine thoſe ladies ſhe had offered to his election, in order to contribute to her happineſs. She commended his obedience, and they parted: ſhe to prepare herſelf to aſſiſt at this great ceremony; he, to meditate on what had paſſed. He walked towards the ſpot where Brewer was buried. His thoughts were fixed on him, and he trod inſenſibly the accuſtomed path. He found himſelf ſtopped by his grave before he knew where he was. He ſtood gazing in ſilence on it for ſome mo-

ments. His hands were folded on his breaſt; his head hung down, and the tear ſuffuſed his eye. "Thou ſhould'ſt have "aſſiſted at this ceremony, my poor friend, "had'ſt thou yet lived." He ſighed as he ſpoke. "To thee I owe what I am: to "thy care, to thy parental fondneſs I am "indebted for almoſt every bleſſing. I "have got fortune, but know not what to "do with it. The man who ſhould have "ſteered my little veſſel at its firſt en-"trance into the troubled ocean of life, "has quitted the helm: but he always "taught me the ſweet leſſons of Benevo-"lence, and ſtrongly inculcated the pre-"cepts of Humanity; theſe will I ever "follow. To do as he has done, will be "acting rightly. They would have me "marry too; and be ſerved as thou wert, "Brewer, by an ungrateful female! No. "Thy hiſtory remains yet deeply imprint-"ed in my memory. What woman, after "thy wife, can be truſted? When neither

"gratitude,

"gratitude, or affection could reſtrain her "libidinous appetites. Farewell, much "injured, and by me, much-lamented "ſhade. Fortune may baniſh me to the "moſt diſtant parts of the world, but I "ſhall always remember thee." This was the laſt time he viſited the grave of Brewer, till he raiſed a handſome marble monument over him.

He returned home and prepared to dreſs. This did not take up much time. His garment was plain: but the natural gracefulneſs and beauty of his perſon amply compenſated for his want of finery. Short a time as he was in dreſſing himſelf, yet the greater part of the company was aſſembled when Wills entered the room. As he had been ſo cloſely attached to Brewer and his ſtudies, he had made few acquaintances, and was obliged to undergo the ceremony of being introduced to every body. Among the many requiſites neceſſary to complete the behaviour of a man, Brewer did not

forget

forget to have his pupil taught thoſe of dancing and fencing. The young gentleman received and returned the compliments of the company, with the greateſt eaſe, and moſt natural politeneſs. The men allowed him accompliſhed, the women thought him amiable. The gueſts were numerous. The dinner was elegant: that Pris prided herſelf in, nearly as much as in her nephew. There is no female compoſition without a ſpark of vanity: it will break forth in ſpite of every thing, and Pris was actuated by it. Among the reſt of the dainties, provided on this occaſion, was a turtle. Prue was obſerved to eat remarkably hearty of it. The greater part of the company were very much pleaſed, and beſtowed many commendations on the excellence of the cookery, and the elegance of the entertainment. Some of the younger ladies did not pay ſo much attention to the dinner, as the perſon who occaſioned it. Their gentle boſoms felt the ſting of envy,

and

and the fears of ſuperiority in each other. Diſengaged, and alike indifferent to them all, there was no cauſe of complaint. His attention and aſſiduities were ſo equally divided among them, that none had reaſon to ſuppoſe ſhe was leſs admired than her neighbour. But this indifference gave way, when Mrs. and Miſs Collins came in the afternoon. Theſe ladies had excuſed themſelves from dining, but promiſed to wait on Miſs Kingleys in the evening. Wills, who had never ſeen any thing ſo lovely as Miſs Collins, involuntarily attached himſelf to her: he could no longer retain that equality of demeanour, which he reſolved in vain to adhere to, or the reſolutions he had made at poor Brewer's grave. His eyes told her how much he thought her ſuperior to every body elſe; and informed her, that though he was obliged to behave politely to the other ladies, he ſhould be happy were thoſe civilities confined to her alone. Nor was ſhe unworthy of them.

A ſhape,

A ſhape, exquiſitely fine; a face, that beſpoke the moſt delicate ſenſibility, fair and blooming; eyes, that ſparkled as they rolled; this was Miſs Collins. Nor did ſhe behold Wills with an unfavourable aſpect. His face, that diſplayed the bloom of youth, was finely formed; his eyes were large, and piercing; the colour in his cheeks, was the conſequence of uninterrupted health, and manly exerciſe: his fine auburn hair ſhaded his face, and contraſted the whiteneſs of his ſkin; it flowed in ringlets in his neck, untortured by irons; nor yet tucked in a bag, dangling in a queue, or twiſted in a club. His were

Hyperion's curls: the front of Jove himſelf.

To this may be added a faultleſs ſhape, dreſſed in that neat and elegant plainneſs, which indicates no want of fine cloaths, either to conceal defects, or ſhew beauties to advantage.

As

As Pris had deſigned a ball for the young folks in the evening, Wills had been very eaſy about his partner, till Miſs Collins appeared; but then he was caſting about how he ſhould contrive to dance with her. He was forced to open the ball, by walking a minuet with a lady whoſe rank demanded the preference. His dancing was admired; but it was inanimate to that, when he had the happineſs of handing Miſs Collins out. Every motion, every look, diſplayed his feelings. His ſteps were like the gentle breeze of the evening, which glides over the ſleeping lake, without ruffling its ſurface. Actuated by one ſentiment, their looks were beauty, and their movements harmony. They were almoſt univerſally allowed the handſomeſt couple in the room: for the young ladies, who had a deſign upon Wills's heart, could not help finding fault with Miſs Collins, who appeared the object of his admiration.

Each

Each one found a ſeparate fault in her; and, were they all added together, and all true, ſhe would not have had a perfection left. As there were more ladies than gentlemen, the former were to draw lots for their partners, to prevent any affront which the neglected might conceive, if the men had followed their inclinations in chooſing thoſe whom they liked beſt, and who, unleſs they danced together, could not be taken out. While the lots were diſtributing, Wills whiſpered a ſecret prayer to the blind goddeſs of chance, to be propitious: and, for once, ſhe attended to her votary. His heart throbbed with tumultuous joy, when her fair hand diſplayed the billet on which his name was written. "How much am I indebted to for-
"tune, Madam," ſaid he, approaching her, "for thus intereſting herſelf in my
"behalf! but I aſſure you it was not with-
"out

"out my ſupplications: ſhe has liſtened to "my prayers, and granted them."

"I ſhould alſo be indebted to her," returned the lady, "for favouring me with "ſo good a partner."

She had not time to ſay more: he led her in triumph to her place, and began the dance. His agility, his taſte in dancing country dances, was as conſpicuous as in a minuet. The lovely couple ſeemed mutually enamoured of each other, and ſome tender marks of eſteem had eſcaped them both, attended, on the lady's ſide, with the moſt delicate reſerve. The evening paſſed away in the greateſt harmony; and the gueſts ſeemed reciprocally pleaſed with their entertainment, and each other.

The next day the family was alarmed with an account of Prue's illneſs. Phyſicians were ſent for, who, ſhaking their heads, prognoſticated evil. Her diſorder was occaſioned by a ſurfeit, and the heat

of

of the room where the ball was. She grew gradually worſe and worſe. It might be that old age, it might be that the faculty, rather aſſiſted the diſorder, by ſurfeiting her a ſecond time with drugs; but, be that as it may, in a week's time ſhe departed this life, and left her whole fortune to her ſiſter. This accident prevented Wills and his aunt from returning the viſits of their friends for ſome time. Pris was now in poſſeſſion of all the fortune of old Wills. And ſhe who, with a third part of it, was benevolent, humane, and charitable, was now ſo ſo much altered in her diſpoſition, that ſhe was neither the one nor the other. And this change happened very ſuddenly: for, as ſoon as Prue was interred, ſhe made a reform in her houſehold; and began to declaim, with the greateſt virulence, againſt thoſe very actions in young Wills, which ſhe formerly applauded him for, and aſſiſted him in. Her nephew was utterly at a loſs

to

to account for this ſudden alteration: but he had too much reſpect for his aunt to oppoſe her openly; therefore he purſued the bent of his own inclinations, without her participation or knowledge.

CHAPTER XIV.

The proſpect of a marriage; and how it was obſcured.

WILLS was impatient till he could viſit Miſs Collins. He was obliged to wait for Miſs Kingley's going abroad: for, under this title we ſhall always hereafter diſtinguiſh Pris. At length ſhe accompanied him to ſee Mrs. Collins; and her daughter was not a little pleaſed to ſee Wills again. Her mother was by no means averſe to his paying his addreſſes to Charlotte. The proſpect he had of ſucceeding to his aunt's fortune, was a circumſtance that

that forwarded his ſuit very much, both with the mother and the daughter; conſequently, he ſoon found himſelf on a very good footing there. Wills had not been there above three times, when he perceived he had got a rival in a Mr. Peterſon, whom he found almoſt conſtantly there. As he had no reaſon to believe he was diſagreeable to Miſs Collins, he was much ſurprized at finding Peterſon very eaſy at his viſiting them ſo frequently. This he could not unravel: but he had not as yet been ſo particular with Charlotte as he ought to have been, from want of opportunity to acquaint her with the feelings of his heart. The number of ſlaves, not the worth of them, was what Miſs Collins prided herſelf in; and though ſhe liked Wills better than any man ſhe had ever ſeen, ſhe could not relinquiſh her other admirers for his ſake. She gave them encouragement, to make them perſevere in their attendance,

without

without having any notion of recompenſing their paſſion. To each ſhe accorded little favours, ſufficient to keep their hopes alive: each imagined himſelf the happy man, and took no notice of her behaviour to others; who all had their reaſons for ſuppoſing themſelves likewiſe in a fair road of being bleſſed. Miſs Collins's fortune did not exceed four thouſand pounds; and Wills was the moſt advantageous match that had yet offered for her: and, as vanity had taken poſſeſſion of her heart, there was but little room left for love. Indeed that was not much regarded; and the hopes of enjoying pomp and grandeur in marrying Wills, ſuperſeded every other conſideration; and, till he appeared, Peterſon had been the moſt favoured of all her train. He was a young man poſſeſſed of a good heart and plentiful eſtate; who, like Wills, had been ſtruck with her figure, and overlooking the want of a fortune ſuitable to his own,

would

would have married her. He had not all thoſe perſonal charms to boaſt of, that Wills had; yet he was far from being diſagreeable. In the courſe of his viſits at her houſe, they became acquainted, and puſhed their addreſſes to the lady in concert. Her choice was to determine their fate: and this could not be otherwiſe than agreeable to her, who thereby had an opportunity of indulging her pride and inclination at once.

Things had continued in this ſituation for ſome time, while Miſs Collins ſtill delayed giving a definitive anſwer; and Miſs Kingley ſtill adhered more cloſely to the frugal plan ſhe had laid down at her ſiſter's death, when Wills, going home one evening from viſiting his miſtreſs, found a gentleman ſitting with his aunt, who, by his garb, appeared to be an officer, and by his dialect a Scotchman. Another gentleman, whom he knew to be an old acquaintance of

his

his aunt's, was alſo there, and, as he ſuppoſed, the perſon who had introduced the ſtranger. After announcing and introducing captain Mac Gregor to Wills, as it was rather early in the evening, a pool of quadrille was propoſed; and the captain approving it, the cards were produced, and they prepared to engage. The uſual manner in which they had been accuſtomed to play was, ſix pence a fiſh: but to this captain Mac Gregor objected. "It was too extra-"vagant, and he cu'd na afford it: that "it was a vara bad way of throwing awa "his ſiller." It was accordingly limited to his ſtint; and two pence a Fiſh was the greateſt ſum he ever played for. Wills obſerved this ſtroke of œconomy was highly acceptable to his aunt, and ſhe ſeemed to ſmile on the captain very graciouſly. This had ſo good an effect on the North Briton, that he diſplayed his knowledge in the art of ſaving, and uttered, with great ſelf-ap-

plauſe, ſeveral ſentences and adages, recommending the practice of frugality. Miſs Kingley ſeconded theſe ſtrokes; and Wills ſat to be talked at, as he did not confine himſelf in every particular to thoſe rules which they laid down in concert; he therefore held his tongue: and, as fortune ſeemed to favour the captain and Miſs Kingley, the captain told him, that he "wa'd ha' "loſt a muckle deal o' ſiller, if he had not "regulated the price of the fiſh." Wills replied, "that he himſelf might be more "benefited by that regulation at laſt, as "the pool was not out." His words were prophetic: he ſoon after played a *ſans prendre vole*, to the no ſmall mortification of the captain; and the other gentleman began to be very ſucceſsful. To people who are very avaricious, a loſs at cards, though but trifling, is matter of great concern, and never fails to ſour their tempers. Wills and his friend enjoyed that reverſe

of

of luck, that gave occaſion to the captain to complain of the mutability of fortune. Miſs Kingley conſoled him in the tendereſt manner on his loſs, which amounted to three ſhillings; adding, that ſhe was alſo a loſer. The captain ſeemed attentive to what would pleaſe Miſs Kingley, and ſhe was delighted with the captain's manner. He ſtayed to ſupper, as he was preſſed; and was invited to come and play a pool with them when it ſuited his inclination or convenience. A profuſion of compliments ſucceeded this invitation, and a multitude of flattering acknowledgements, which pleaſed Miſs Kingley ſo highly, that ſhe renewed it. Wills, ſeeing the humour his aunt was in, ſoon after the departure of the company, complained of being ſleepy, and took his candle; and, wiſhing his aunt a good night, went to bed.

The next morning, while he was gone to take an early walk, a poor old man,

who had been a long time a penſioner upon Wills's bounty, called to know if he was up. The aunt met him, and demanded his buſineſs. "It was only to ſee my "young maſter I came, good lady;" ſaid the poor old man, bowed down with age.

"And what do you want with him?"

"Ah, my lady, he has been the means "of ſaving me and my two poor grand-"children from ſtarving. I had a ſon, "and he was preſſed, and killed in the laſt "war; and my poor daughter, for ſhe al-"ways behaved to me like one, was left "with two children; and about two years "ago ſhe died, and left me to take care "of the two poor babes. And, indeed, "ſweeter children never my eyes beheld: "and what could I do, a poor old man, "now ſeventy-eight years old? They were "not capable of taking care of themſelves, "ſo I was forced to take a woman to look "after the children; but the allowance "from the pariſh was not ſufficient to ſup-

"port

"port us, and we were almoſt ſtarving,
"when my young maſter, and the good
"gentleman that was along with him, came
"by accident near our cottage, and ſaw
"the two little ones at the door; and when
"they came in, I told them all that had
"befallen me; and they gave me money.
"My good maſter told me he would allow
"me eight pounds every year, and put out
"the boy, which is the eldeſt, prentice,
"when he was fit for it. I have remem-
"bered him in my prayers ever ſince: and
"my little innocents pray for him too, for
"he wiped the tear from my aged eyes,
"and he made the hearts of the orphans
"glad. And the other gentleman al-
"lowed me five pounds a year more; but
"he is gone, and I have been to ſee where
"he is laid. It was the leaſt I could do,
"to go and ſee the grave of the man who
"helped me in my diſtreſs. It was my
"misfortune to loſe him to be ſure, but it
"can't be help'd. I muſtn't ſend the boy

"to ſchool now, as I did before. I have "walked nine long miles to ſee my maſter "now."

"Well then, honeſt man," ſaid Miſs Kingley, "you muſt return in the ſame "manner you came, for my nephew is not "within, nor do I know when he will come "home. And I can tell you, that he has "got no money to throw away if he was."

"Ah! God bleſs him," ſaid the old man, the tear trickling down his furrowed cheek; "he deſired me to come to him "when I wanted any thing: but I muſt be "contented, and try to reach home again, "that I may have the ſatisfaction of dying "with my poor children. And may God "bleſs you, good Madam."

He tottered through the court before the door, and purſued his journey. Miſs Kingley returned to the parlour, and ſat in expectation of her nephew's coming back to breakfaſt. It may appear odd, that her heart ſhould all of a ſudden be ſo totally

totally eſtranged from the feelings of humanity, or that ſhe ſhould have ſo ſoon forgotten thoſe leſſons of benevolence which ſhe formerly taught her nephew: yet theſe changes are frequently met with, and may be in part accounted for. Age, whoſe darling, and, in general, ſole paſſion is avarice, was approaching her with haſty ſteps; beſides, it has been often known that the generoſity, and even prodigality, of a perſon with a middling fortune, has been changed into the moſt retentive avarice on a lucky encreaſe of wealth. The rich feel not the wants of the poor, nor will they relieve neceſſities they have no conception of.

At length Wills returned, and his aunt introduced the merit of Captain Mac Gregor, his frugality, and good ſenſe. "If all his "good ſenſe," returned Wills, "conſiſts "in his maxims of frugality, it is but a "negative virtue at beſt. Perhaps his cir-"cumſtances will not allow him to be as

"generous as he would wiſh, and a falſe "ſhame prevents his owning his compaſ-"ſionate ſenſe of the wants of mankind, "when he cannot relieve them: but ſurely "the leaſt he can give to diſtreſs is his "pity."

"And that's all a perſon with a ſmall "fortune has occaſion to give: for I have "no notion of ſquandering away money "upon people that one can get nothing "by. If you were to get a proper return "for your generoſity, I ſhould have not "the leaſt objection to your——"

"It would ceaſe to be generoſity, when "a return was expected."

"That may be: but I am ſure it would "only be a proper regard to your own in-"tereſt."

"Ah! Madam, I have an intereſt in re-"lieving the wants of the neceſſitous; I "have every return I expect or hope for "in it."

"Yes,

"Yes, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "ſo you may; "but let me tell you, that it would be- "come you more, than encouraging lazy "and idle people to come after you, to "look after ſettling yourſelf in life."

"Who has been after me, Madam," ſaid Wills, "that you have occaſion to "reproach me with it in this manner?"

"An old man, whom you and your tu- "tor there, Mr. Brewer, I wiſh you had "never ſeen him, ſupported, inſtead of "letting the pariſh maintain him. What "buſineſs have you to keep a family be- "fore you get one? But I ſent the old "fellow away as he came."

"Good heaven! how long ſince?"

"Oh, a good hour ago."

"Then," ſaid Wills, ſtarting up from his untaſted breakfaſt, "I may be able to "overtake him before he gets far. How "his poor old heart is wrung with an- "guiſh."

He ſnatched his hat, and ſtrode away, in hopes of finding him on his road before he reached home. Miſs Kingley was in no very ſweet humour when her nephew left her; but recollecting that he promiſed to allow this poor man ſo much a year, and that he would not break his word, which ſhe admitted he ought to keep ſacred, ſhe began to be more reconciled to his abrupt departure; and her affection for him, which could only be exceeded by her inordinate love of money, prompted her to excuſe this action. Pity ſucceeded, when ſhe recollected that he had gone off without eating his breakfaſt: and then ſhe feared he might be ill, and was ſorry ſhe turned the man away. But her final determination was, to lay the ſtricteſt injunction on him to avoid theſe extravagancies for the future, under pain of her diſpleaſure; and this ſhe intended to communicate to him on his return. Wills, whoſe uneaſineſs at the converſation that

paſſed

paſſed between him and his aunt, cannot well be deſcribed, walked as faſt as his legs could carry him, in the road that led to the old man's cottage: he was not more ſurprized than vexed at this ſudden change in his aunt's diſpoſition: and though he loved her as a mother, and would not have diſobliged her for any conſideration, yet he foreſaw that his purſuing this mode of diſpoſing of his money, would be the cauſe of many bickerings between them. He ſaw, at that moment, the wrinkled face of avarice in all its horrors; and ſo ugly did it ſeem, that he abhorred it more than ever. Theſe cogitations, and the unhappineſs he felt at the poor old man's being ſent away, as he had reaſon to fear, in ſo ungentle a manner from his aunt's houſe, beguiled the way, and he was greatly concerned leſt he ſhould not overtake the man before he reached home. But when he got on the top of a little eminence, he perceived him ſitting by the road's ſide, reſting

himſelf, before he ventured to attempt to aſcend the hill that roſe before him. Wills made all the ſpeed he could to get up to him, before he ſhould purſue his walk. He need not have hurried himſelf, for the old man was too much wearied to go on again in haſte. Fatigued with his walk, and ſorely diſtreſſed at not meeting Wills, and what the lady had ſaid to him, he ſat in ſilent contemplation on his misfortunes. Wills approached him unperceived; his knees ſupported his elbows, and his face was hid by his hands. Wills ſtood at his ſide without being noticed by him. "Well over-"taken, father," ſaid he. The old man lifted up his head, and ſeeing his benefactor, made an attempt to riſe: "Don't "ſtir," added Wills, "I will ſit down by "you." He did ſo. "I am ſorry that I "was not at home when you called, and "that a miſtake was the occaſion of your "being ſent away in the manner you were, "without my ſeeing you: but I ſet out in

"hopes

"hopes of overtaking you, and I am "lucky enough to find you on your road."

"Ah! Sir, you are too good to me: "my neceſſities make me too troubleſome: "but God has that reward for you I am "not able to give you."

"No more of that, father: have you eat "or drank any thing yet?"

"Nothing have I taſted indeed, maſter: "my poor little ones will want what I "ſhould ſpend upon myſelf, and I ſhall "have more comfort in eating a bit with "them."

Wills ſtarted up, and, caſting his eyes about, deſcried a little ale-houſe at a ſmall diſtance from them. "Come," ſaid he, aſſiſting him to riſe, "I have had no break-"faſt neither, we will go and ſee what your "houſe can afford us."

They travelled acroſs two fields, and reached the houſe. Wills cautioned him againſt ſaying any thing about him, while they were there; and calling for ſome bread

and

and cheeſe, and ſome beer, the only entertainment to be procured, they both fell to with a good appetite. And it is not to be doubted that Wills was better pleaſed with his repaſt, than if he had ſat down to an elegant breakfaſt, ſerved up in plate, and attended by half a dozen ſervants in livery. He preſſed the poor heartleſs old man to eat, who, when he had refreſhed and reſted himſelf, expreſſed a deſire to go homewards. Wills accompanied him; and when he ſeemed to think it might be too fatigueing for his young maſter to go ſo far, he aſſured him that he was determined, as he was above half way, to go to his houſe, and ſee the children. The grandfather could not contradict him, or oppoſe his inclination. He endeavoured to ſhorten the road, by the relation of thoſe misfortunes which reduced him to that condition in which Wills found him. He had been a farmer; and his troubles ariſing from thoſe accidents which neither prudence or vigilance can

prevent or foreſee, he became at length an object of charity himſelf, who had afforded it in the former part of his life to others. They arrived at laſt at home, and Wills was extremely pleaſed to ſee the manner in which the children were kept. He recompenſed the woman who took care of them, for her trouble; and informing the old man, that for the future he would allow him twelve, inſtead of eight pounds a year, and alſo clothe the children, he left him, too much ſurprized and overwhelmed with gratitude and joy to utter a word, and haſtened home.

His aunt, who had been uneaſy at his ſtay, treated him with great kindneſs at dinner; but as ſoon as the things were removed, ſhe renewed the converſation that had been interrupted by his abrupt departure. "Well, Frank," ſaid ſhe, "how "ſoon did you overtake your old pen-"ſioner?"

"About

"About four miles from hence, Ma-
"dam."

"Well, I don't blame you, child, for
"adhering to your word, if you promiſed
"to allow him ſo much a year; but I hope
"you have thought better of it, and not
"continued it to him: for you will have
"occaſion for what money you have, to
"provide for yourſelf. I am not able to
"keep this houſe entirely by myſelf. When
"your aunts were alive, they had a third
"part each of the expence to bear. It all
"devolves upon me now, and I find it
"very heavy: therefore, my dear Frank,
"be frugal, and take care of the eſtate
"you have: for, if you continue to ſpend
"it ſo idly, you will certainly be in want
"yourſelf. Another thing I would recom-
"mend to you is, not to carry matters too
"far with Miſs Collins: ſhe has but
"four thouſand pounds, and that won't
"be enough to buy you a place,

"which

"which I think is the moſt eligible me-
"thod of laying out your money. Be-
"ſides, I have reaſon to believe that ſhe
"is gay and extravagant; and I aſſure you
"I ſhall not give my conſent to your being
"married to her.—There are ſeveral wo-
"men of more prudence, and better for-
"tunes, that would be glad to have ſuch
"an handſome young fellow as you are.
"I am going to Mrs. Popham's to drink
"tea: will you accompany me?"

Wills replied in the negative; and, making an excuſe that he was engaged, went out to take a ſolitary walk, and meditate on the ſituation of his affairs.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XV.

Prudence defeated by honeſty. An adventure related.

THIS interdiction of his aunt's to marry Miſs Collins, was a thunderbolt to the affection Wills had conceived for that young lady. "I love her," ſaid he to himſelf, "and from what I have experienced "in her behaviour, ſhe is not averſe to me. "Shall I then, having endeavoured to in-"ſpire her with a tender paſſion for me, "relinquiſh her from motives of intereſt? "Periſh the ungenerous, the deteſted "thought! I ſhould be deaf to all the "ſuggeſtions of honour, did I not learn "from her the ſtate of her heart, and know "upon what footing I am with her. Should "ſhe prefer me to any other man, I will "immediately unite myſelf to her by the "moſt ſacred ties. We will live content-"edly, and, I am ſure, happily. But I "will

" will not diſguiſe my aunt's diſlike to it:
" I will open my heart to her, and diſ-
" play my ſituation. If ſhe generouſly
" prefers me, I ſhall be the happieſt of men.
" I have nothing to fear from the feelings
" of her heart. Her mother, indeed, may
" prevent her following the dictates of her
" inclination. The love of wealth is na-
" tural to age: my aunt is a ſad example
" of it." Pleaſing himſelf with a thouſand romantic notions of happineſs, which could only be found in the brain of a young man, of a fertile imagination, in love, he poſted away to Mrs. Collins's; and luckily met her at home, and her daughter, diſengaged. After the uſual compliments, the mother ſlipped away, and left the young people alone. Wills fixed his eyes on the ground: he ſighed, and was ſilent. Miſs Collins obſerved, that he was very dull that evening, and aſked if he was well. " I am, Madam,
" very well as to my bodily health; but
" my mind is ſick."

" What

"What can affect that, Mr. Wills? "You were always merry and ſprightly till "now: ſure there muſt be ſome great al- "teration in you. I hope there is no oc- "caſion for this change in your diſpoſi- "tion."

"It is poſſible to reſtore me to my former "diſpoſition, Miſs Collins; and it is in "your power to do it."

"In mine, Sir!"

"You cannot miſunderſtand me. I have "addreſſed you with a truth and ſincerity, "that is not common in the profeſſions of "men in general to the objects of their af- "fections. I love you, charming maid, "and you are no ſtranger to my paſſion: "my intentions are the moſt honourable. "I am now my own maſter. You are "now at age. Your fortune is in your "own hands. Will you conſent to become "irrevocably mine? This addreſs may "ſurprize you: take time to conſider the

"anſwer

"anſwer on which the happineſs of my fu-
"ture life depends. Think, if you can paſs
"the remainder of your days with me."

He pauſed. A thouſand thoughts ſuggeſted themſelves to Miſs Collins, before ſhe gave the deciſive anſwer which Wills required. It is true, in her own breaſt ſhe eſteemed him more for his perſonal qualifications only, than any other lover ſhe had: but the fortune that he expected from his aunt had alſo great weight with her. She was very artful, and concluded there was ſomething more concealed under the ſolemnity of this addreſs, than ſhe could at once penetrate. An equivocal anſwer was deemed the moſt proper on this occaſion: and ſhe muttered, intelligibly enough, that he was far from diſagreeable to her; that ſhe ever eſteemed him; and that he was worthy of a much better wife than ſhe could make him. "I cannot have, I do not deſire a
"better," ſaid Wills, his extaſy getting the better

better of his reaſon; "but let me not deceive
"her on whom my heart doats. I need not
"again aſſure you of the ſincerity and deli-
"cacy of my affection. I prefer you to all
"the women in the world, therefore I will
"act uprightly, and deal honeſtly by you.
"My aunt, from what reaſon or by what
"advice I know not, has forbidden me to
"addreſs you. She has declared I ſhan't
"have her conſent; and ſhe objects only
"the ſmallneſs of your fortune; but that
"is no objection to a man who loves as I
"do. It will aſſiſt in placing us in a gen-
"teel independence, equally removed from
"the contempt attending poverty, or the
"envy that waits on the rich. It will pro-
"cure me ſome place, and my own little
"eſtate will help to ſupport us. The plea-
"ſure I ſhall have in communicating my
"joys, or ſharing my troubles, few as I
"hope will happen to us, with you, will
"make up for the want of riches. Thus
"I open my heart to you; and you cannot

"hereafter

"hereafter reproach me with double-deal-
"ing. If I ſhall be ſo happy as to find I
"have inſpired you with a mutual paſſion,
"and you ſhall overlook my want of a
"greater fortune, I ſhall be the moſt
"bleſſed of mankind; and all my future
"life ſhall be devoted to your ſervice, and
"tend to convince you of the greatneſs
"and ſincerity of my love."

He ſtopped; but he might have gone on for half an hour longer, before ſhe would have interrupted him. In ſhort, Wills began to loſe even thoſe beauties of ſhape and face that ſhe ſo fooliſhly before had thought ſhe perceived in him. The want of fortune was a thing ſhe had no notion of over-looking: and ſhe could not conceive how a man could be ſo ridiculous as to talk of dwelling in a cottage, and living upon love. Happily for her it was, that her paſſions were never ſo violent, but ſhe could call her recollection and reaſon to her aid; and while Wills was telling her, with

with his eyes ſuffuſed with tears, and an heart bleeding with anguiſh, how much he lamented the ſeverity of his fate, ſhe concluded, that it would be very abſurd in her to loſe ſo good a match as Mr. Peterſon, who began to look very ſhy upon her, from her apparent prepoſſeſſion in favour of young Wills. But though theſe were her ſentiments, a principle of ſhame prevented her from explaining them directly; as ſhe had given him hopes, ſhe could not retract of a ſudden. She longed for her mother, or ſomebody, to come into the room, to break off a converſation which became extremely tedious, and would be much more ſo if it was continued. She was, however, obliged to anſwer him. She told him, "ſhe was honoured by his attachment, "and ſhould always eſteem him in propor- "tion to his merits: that ſhe knew not "how ſhe had incurred Miſs Kingley's "diſpleaſure; was ſorry for it; but had too "great a regard for him, to ſuffer him to

"be

"be ruined by an unhappy paſſion, which "he might have conceived for her, and "thereby forfeit his title to his aunt's fa-"vour and fortune, which ſhe had often "heard her declare ſhe intended to leave "him: it would be, therefore, more pru-"dent for them both to forget each other; "and though it might be painful, it was "abſolutely neceſſary that they ſhould "part." Wills heard her with attention, and was preparing to combat theſe reaſons. He began to ſpeak. His words died upon his tongue. He threw himſelf on his knees before her, and caught her hand in his. "If you favour me with your love, Miſs "Collins, if you will conſent to be mine, "I ſhall not mind my aunt's favour, "or——"

The door opened, and, to his utter confuſion, Peterſon entered. When Wills was in that poſture, he heſitated, and ſeemed doubtful whether he ſhould go in or no: but ſeeing him ſtart up in diſorder, and

perceiving Miſs Collins looking very diſdainfully at him, crying, at the ſame time, "that ſhe wondered how Mr. Wills could "be ſo extremely fooliſh," he took courage, and ventured in. "Lord, Mr. Peterſon," ſaid Miſs Collins, "what prevents your coming in? We are upon no "buſineſs that you can interrupt: Mr. "Wills had only a mind to make himſelf "ridiculous." Wills's blood boiled at this ſpeech; but he determined not to make himſelf more ridiculous, by expoſing his vexation. At one moment he thought this might only be a feint of Miſs Collins's to conceal her uneaſineſs at being thus balked; but he was ſoon undeceived. Peterſon had no reaſon to complain of the coldneſs of her behaviour to him that evening; and he ſaw, with pleaſure, the mortifications of a rival whom he ſo much feared. Wills was left to the indulgence of his own thoughts; for Miſs Collins did not much diſturb him by talking to him, or aſking

him

him queſtions. Nor was he at a loſs to conceive the reaſon of this change; for it followed ſo ſuddenly the confeſſion he made her, that it was as perfectly underſtood, as if ſhe had told him her reaſons verbally. Grievouſly chagrined as Wills was by her behaviour, he could not think of ſtaying any longer there, and affording freſh matter of triumph to his rival. He therefore departed, without being preſſed to ſtay; and took a round-about way to go home, as well to kill time, as to be delivered up entirely to his own reflections. He ſaw through Miſs Collins's treatment of him, and perceived very plainly, that the proſpect he had of inheriting his aunt's fortune, was the greateſt charm to her. So mercenary a temper, the direct reverſe of his own, gave Wills no ſmall diſguſt: it alienated his affections from her, and ſhe appeared not the ſame amiable girl in his eyes which he had till then thought her.

But he determined to make another trial of her, and know whether ſhe was reſolved to forſake him. Thus,

Ruminating ſweet and bitter thought,

he ſauntered along. But his *reverie* was diſturbed by ſome outcries, that ſeemed to him to proceed from a perſon in diſtreſs. The thought was enough: he flew to the ſpot whence he ſuppoſed the noiſe came. He was right. A gentleman was defending himſelf, as well as he could, againſt three ruffians, who were treating him very ill, and, to all appearance, wanted to rob him. The eagerneſs of the attack, and the vigour of the reſiſtance, prevented their perceiving Wills's approach. With an excellent ſtick, which he generally made the companion of his walks, he brought two of them to the earth; the other, deprived of his aſſociates, fled with great nimbleneſs. "Sir," ſaid the gentleman, "I am

"under

"under vara great obligations till you for "your timely aſſiſtance."

"Ha! Captain M'Gregor, I am very "happy indeed in rendering you any ſer-"vice."

"Oh! Maiſter Wills, are you my deli-"verer? In gude troth, ye're a bonny "chiel: but what mun we do with theſe "dogs here?"

"Let them depart," ſaid Wills; "their "own conſciences, perhaps laden with "crimes, will be puniſhment enough for "them. Affected by our lenity, they may "live to repent."

"Hoot awa," replied the Captain; "they ſhall be hanged: we're match "enough for them now, and we'll incar-"cerate them; they ſhall be made exam-"ples of *in terrorem*."

"Come, come, Captain, you have loſt "nothing by them, you are only a little "frightened; let us not be inſtrumental

" in depriving theſe poor wretches of life.
" You,

" Taught by that pow'r that pities you,
" Shou'd learn to pity them."

" Weel, weel, Maiſter Wills, ſyn ye " turn advocate for them I wull na pro- " ceed to extremities. Ye may gang your " gait, you louſy dogs ye, ye'll be hanged " yet for a' this."

" You have had an eſcape now," ſaid Wills to the fellows who ſtood motionleſs and abaſhed before him: " let it be a cau- " tion to you to ſhun the paths of villany " for the future. If neceſſity induced you " to commit this act of violence, it may " be an excuſe, though a very poor one; " for honeſt induſtry can never want a ſub- " ſiſtence, or bread to eat. Leſt want " ſhould prompt you to repeat your offence, " divide that guinea between you; go thy " ways, and do ſo no more. If any other

" cauſe

"cauſe urged you to this deed, ſuch as "wanting the means to ſupport your idle-"neſs or extravagance, my admonitions I "fear will be in vain; yet the dread of a "ſhameful puniſhment, if you have no "regard for virtue or honeſty, ſhould put "a ſtop to this practice."

He held out the guinea towards the neareſt of them, M'Gregor pulled back his hand. "What the de'el, Maiſter Wills, are "are you going to reward the villains?"

"You need not have prevented the "young gentleman's generoſity," ſaid one of the men. "I would not have taken it "from him: I ſee his nobleneſs of ſpirit, "and admire it. The brave are always "generous and humane. For my part, I "have, in other times, been in a better "way than this; and the reproof I have "met to-night has affected me more, than "corporal puniſhment would have done. I "thank you for your lenity, Sir: it has "had the deſired effect. I will forſake my

"evil courſes, and you ſhall have all the "merit of my converſion."

"I am ſurprized to hear a man, who "acts in the character of a robber, ſpeak "in ſuch a ſtile, and expreſs ſuch ſenti- "ments: there is ſome myſtery in this, "and if you will rely on my honour—"

"That I would willingly," returned the other; "but this myſtery cannot be un- "ravelled now. All I hope for, is to meet "you in ſome place, when I may be able "to return you the ſervice you have done "me this night. Will you tell me your "name?"

"Wills."

"It is enough. I ſhall retain it in my "memory till my dying hour; and when "I dare pray, you ſhall be remembered."

He beckoned to his companion, who ſpoke not a word; and jumping over the ditch, gained the fields, and ſoon became inviſible in the ſhades of night.

CHAPTER XVI.

A converſation. Another attempt of WILLS's; *its ſucceſs; and another adventure begun.*

"AND which way do you go, Cap-
"tain?"

"I am going your road, as I intended
"to ſleep wi' my friend to-night."

"Well, then, we ſhall be companions."

"It's vara agreeable; but I don't believe
"that raſcal's dying hour, as he ca's it, is
"far off."

"I am of another opinion, Captain: he
"may live to be a very worthy member of
"the community yet; perhaps he has a
"wife and children who are ſtarving, and
"the only way he has of ſupporting them,
"and keeping them alive, is by commit-
"ting theſe acts of violence."

"Weel, Sir, vara weel, Sir, it may be
"ſo; but then he ought to be hanged.
"When a man lives in a country governed

" by laws, and he tranſgreſſes any o' thoſe " laws, he ſhould ſuffer ſuch punition as " they preſcribe; and if I donna miſtake, " there is a puniſhment annexed to the " compounding a crime of this nature."

" There may be ſo," ſaid Wills, " but " I cannot ſuppoſe myſelf liable to puniſh- " ment; or imagine I have broken any " law, human or divine, by not aſſiſting " you in the apprehending thoſe unhappy " wretches, and delivering them over to " the hand of juſtice. Suppoſe the crime " is capital, and their lives forfeited by the " commiſſion of it, how could you recon- " cile it to yourſelf to puniſh that man with " death, who had only taken part of your " property?"

" Moſt undoubtedly: elſe wherefore do " we live under that law, which makes it a " crime worthy deeth?"

" That muſt be the fault of that law: " for by the moſt equitable law, which is " that of retaliation, *lex talionis*, an eye for " an

" an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, is only
" required: but, in caſe of murder, I own
" there ſhould be a deprivation of life;
" there no reſtoration can be: but in caſes
" of robbery or theft, where there is no
" corporal damage or injury ſuſtained, if
" the offender was compelled to reſtore
" threefold what he had taken, or, if he
" had no goods of his own, to be kept to
" work in a houſe, ſet apart for that pur-
" poſe, till the profits of his labour ſhould
" amount to the ſum he was to pay, it
" might anſwer a very good end. Let him
" alſo fine to the king, as chief magiſtrate
" and head of that community, whoſe laws
" he had violated. A regulation of this
" kind would make a capital puniſhment
" more terrible, as it would be leſs com-
" mon. Hanging is thought nothing of
" now, its only what is ſeen every day;
" and we have an inſtance that a man would
" rather be hanged than tranſported, be-
" cauſe, during the term of his puniſhment,

" he ſhould be obliged to work. A man
" who was caſt for tranſportation petitioned
" his Majeſty for that purpoſe. And I
" do not imagine there is a nation under
" the ſun, who could make a ſong on the
" awful ſolemnity of a criminal convicted
" going to ſuffer death, and turn the whole
" into ridicule, but the Engliſh. A ſol-
" dier, you muſt know, captain, acquires
" a mechanical courage; from ſeeing ſo
" many fall dead round him, he grows in-
" ured to the fight, and diſregards it."

" You're vara right there, indeed, Maiſter
" Wills; it's vara true. The frequency
" of public executions takes awa' from the
" terror of them: but even allowing a'
" that, do you na think that you were
" wrong in offering a reward, of ſae muckle
" a ſum as a guinea too, to a man wha was
" going to cut my throat?"

" Why, captain, do you aſk me that
" queſtion? it is doubtleſs to give me an

" oppor-

" opportunity of explaining my principles.
" If it was mere and abſolute want that
" induced them to commit ſuch an action,
" ſure it was much better to relieve them,
" than, by letting them continue in the
" ſame neceſſitous ſituation, compel them
" to be guilty of the ſame crime again. If
" it had been habitual to them, they would
" not have refuſed the money I offered.
" Avarice is the cauſe of robbery: and
" ſurely they would not heſitate at leſs diſ-
" honourable means of coming at money;
" neither would the man have ſpoken to
" me as he did: that very circumſtance
" may ſhew him, that it is not neceſſary
" to uſe violence to get at money. Parnell
" has illuſtrated a circumſtance ſomething
" like this in his poem of the Hermit, in
" the character of the avaricious and pe-
" nurious man, when the ſilver cup is left
" with him. The poet ſays,

With

With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
That heav'n can bleſs, if mortals will be kind.
Conſcious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
And feels compaſſion touch his grateful ſoul.
Thus artiſts melt the ſullen ore of lead,
With heaping coals of fire upon its head:
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, looſe from droſs, the ſilver runs below.

"Unexpected acts of beneficence have "wrought wonderous changes."

"I dunna doubt it; but I believe there "will be na change wrought in him. I dunna "think that he wa'd be a bit the better "for going to the univerſity of Glaſgow."

"May be not," ſaid Wills, laughing.

"You miſunderſtand me, Sir," replied the captain, a little piqued at the joke; "I mean, that he is ſo hardened in his "wickedneſs, that no gude example, or "precept either, wou'd have any effect on "him, or cauſe an amendment in his man-"ners: and I cannot help thinking, that "your intending to give the mon a guinea,

"was

"was equally unprecedented and wrong; "for it was only encouraging the villain, "and your lenity was a' miſplaced. Now, "if he had been confined in priſon, or "hanged, as he deſerved, he cou'd na' have "been guilty of the ſame crime again: I "think that you will be acceſſory to every "crime he commits in conſequence of your "letting him eſcape now. And in gude "troth, it had na' happen'd, if you had "na' been the interceeder for him."

"Well, captain, I am obliged to you."

"Nay, nay, not ſo," replied the captain, interrupting him: "You have done "me a ſignal ſervice, and I ſhou'd endea-"vour to return it, though it was con-"trary to my inclinations that the raſcal "eſcaped."

By this time they were near Miſs Kingley's houſe, and Wills inſiſted on his going in with him. There was little force neceſſary. The captain was glad of the invitation,

tion, and complied with it. Miſs Kingley trembled at the danger the poor captain had been in, and ſwallowed the praiſes he beſtowed upon her nephew very greedily. But ſhe joined him againſt poor Wills, when ſhe came to hear of his having ſolicited and procured the releaſe of the robbers; and the offer of the guinea made her outrageous. "You ſhould not be truſted "with money," ſaid the parſimonious aunt, "if you know not how to make a better "uſe of it." Wills thought it hard that Mc Gregor ſhould take a part againſt him, and in vain endeavoured to defend himſelf: while ſhe equally commended the captain's reſolution of puniſhing the rogues, and condemned her nephew for his proceedings, adding bitter reproof. He remained ſilent, ſatisfied with what he had done; and liſtened, though not attentively, to the captain and his aunt, ſtrengthening each other in thoſe prudential maxims which they had

laid

laid down as rules for their conduct. Wills's head ran upon other things, and Miſs Collins was ſtill uppermoſt in his thoughts. He was therefore very glad when the captain took his leave after ſupper; for Miſs Kingley could not think of parting with him till he had refreſhed himſelf, and recovered from the terror this adventure had thrown him into.

Wills retired to bed, but enjoyed very little reſt: he reſolved to have a final anſwer from Miſs Collins reſpecting his ſuit; though, from what he had ſeen, he did not imagine it would be very favourable. His aunt's prejudice in favour of Mc Gregor did not give him much uneaſineſs. "If "ſhe has a mind to beſtow her hand and "fortune upon him," ſaid he to himſelf, "it is out of my power to prevent it: and "if it was not, ſurely I, who am the child "of her bounty, ſhould rather do every "thing in my power to give her pleaſure,

"than

"than hinder it. Beſides, what right have "I to expect her fortune? She may be "tired of doing me good offices, and has "already performed more than I could be "taught to hope for. It will be no diſap-"pointment to me, to loſe what I had but "little reaſon to ſuppoſe I ſhould enjoy. I "have got my father's eſtate, and that is "all, and more than I had a right to ex-"pect." In theſe reflections he paſſed the greater part of the night; and reſigned himſelf, about morning, to that repoſe he wanted. He let two days eſcape before he went to Mrs. Collins's. They were at home to him; and, on his introduction, he found Peterſon there. This chagrined him not a little: for he hoped to have an opportunity of reſuming the converſation that had been broken off ſo abruptly before. As this employed his attention to contrive means to bring it about, he ſat ſilent and thoughtful. Peterſon and Miſs

Collins

Collins were either talking to each other, or toying; inſomuch that they minded nobody elſe. Mrs. Collins rouſed Wills, by telling him, that the next day her daugh- was to become Mrs Peterſon.

"To-morrow! Madam."

"Yes, indeed, Sir, to-morrow."

"Yes, Sir," added Peterſon, "to-mor-
"row makes me the happieſt of men."

"May you always continue ſo, Sir," replied Wills, whom this converſation mortified extremely. The other bowed, and ſaid he did not fear a continuation of happineſs with the charming Miſs Collins.

Wills now ſaw it was all over with him: He alſo ſaw through her motives for preferring his rival, and deſpiſed her in his heart The preſent mode of inſulting him too was ſhocking. With theſe ſentiments it was no difficult thing to baniſh her entirely from his remembrance. Her face had no longer charms for him: there was no muſic

ſic in her voice, or delicacy in her perſon: her ſordid temper threw an odious miſt around her; and ſo thick it was, that Wills's eye could not perceive one beauty through it. He ſtaid there a reaſonable time, that he might not afford them too great a triumph over him; and behaved with remarkable indifference, with ſome attempt at gaiety. He rallied the lady, with good humour, on her approaching change of condition; and aſſigned it as a reaſon for his going away ſo ſoon, that his preſence prevented her making thoſe preparations which would be neceſſary for her appearance the next day. Miſs Collins was not well pleaſed at this apparent indifference: it robbed her of her glory, and prevented Peterſon from eſteeming her ſo highly as he would have otherwiſe done, if Wills had ſeemed more concerned: for ſhe did not chooſe to tell him the cauſe why ſhe had rejected Wills, and admitted his addreſſes;

addreſſes; and he was ſo much intoxicated with pleaſure at her conſenting to become his wife, that he did not trouble himſelf to enquire what her reaſons were. He was happy, and he did not care how he came ſo.

Wills left the houſe, without the leaſt ſpark of affection remaining in his boſom for Miſs Collins: there was a painful void left; and he could not ſometimes help thinking on the perſon that had formerly ſo agreeably occupied it. However, he thoroughly deſpiſed her, and there was no fear of his relapſing. She was loſt to him for ever. Poor Brewer's hiſtory uſed frequently to occur to his remembrance, and would almoſt inſpire him with an hatred to the whole ſex.

It was near night when he left Mrs. Collins's, and paſſing through the Bird-cage-walk to go through Buckingham-gate to Chelſea, his eye was caught with a female, whoſe carriage and air beſpoke her ſuperior to the generality of the unhappy

wretches

wretches that ply there continually, and earn a wretched and precarious ſubſiſtence by the moſt abandoned proſtitution. He walked ſoftly behind her, and perceived a great appearance of poverty in her dreſs: yet ſhe was clean, and aimed not at that flaſhing finery, to ſet off her perſon, that the reſt did. Her hat was flapped over her eyes; nor did ſhe lift up her head, which hung upon her breaſt in ſilent dejection. The ſound of his ſteps behind her could not make her turn her eyes towards him: and he thought he heard her ſob, but he could hear her ſighs very plainly. Her pace was ſlow, and penſive: and ſhe appeared regardleſs of every object that paſſed by her. Such a conduct ſeemed more calculated to repreſs, than ſtimulate deſire. Wills followed her a long time, endeavouring to account to himſelf, but in vain, for her behaviour. Her apparent diſtreſs awakened his compaſſion, not more than her manner his curioſity: and though

he

he was well aware of the tricks practiſed by the adventurers who frequent that place, prepared to accoſt her. In what manner he did it the reader will find in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

This adventure continued.

HOW to addreſs her, Wills could not eaſily ſettle with himſelf. If ſhe was a perſon really in ſorrow, as ſhe ſeemed, he could never have forgiven himſelf for ſpeaking to her in an harſh or diſtreſſing manner. He could not behave rudely to her; that was not in his nature, even tho' he conſidered her as one of thoſe victims devoted to pleaſure. While he was employed in theſe cogitations, and undetermined how to act, ſhe had gained the upper end of the ſhady walk, caſt her eyes upon Roſamond's Pond, ſighed, and turned

ed about to go back again. At that moment Wills met her: and he found he muſt ſpeak to her, or remain unſatisfied concerning her ſituation, which he wiſhed much to know. "Where are you going, "Madam?" ſaid he, in the ſofteſt tone of voice he could poſſibly aſſume. She ſtopped; gazed at him, but anſwered not. He repeated the queſtion, "Where are "you going, Madam?"

"I am going," anſwered ſhe, "to pe-"riſh upon the boſom of an unfortunate "father, who knows not this moment what "is become of me. Don't hinder me "from dying in his——"

She could no more: her ſobs choaked her utterance, and ſhe had been ſuffocated with the riſing guſt of paſſion, if a ſhower of tears had not relieved her.

Wills, who expected one of the uſual anſwers to his queſtion, ſtood thunderſtruck at this reply. "Why do you think "of dying, Madam? Your youth pro-

"miſes

"miſes you long life: and why ſhould "you turn your thoughts on the grave?"

"Want, diſtreſs, and the bitterſt ſtings "of poverty, will cut the thread of life," ſaid ſhe. "Mine is almoſt gone."

"Can money relieve you from your pre-"ſent neceſſities. If it is not beyond my "power to aſſiſt you, I will willingly do "it. My heart is ſuſceptible of your woes, "and I want nothing but the ability to "remove them. You muſt let me know "what they are, and perhaps I may be of "ſervice to you. Accept theſe two gui-"neas from me: I have no more about "me."

"And what recompence do you deſire," ſaid ſhe, in a determined accent, "for "theſe two guineas?"

"None other than the conſideration that "it has been in my power to relieve you, "and that I have the conſcious ſatisfaction "of reſcuing you from want."

"It is too much," returned ſhe: "it is "too much! and ſo unlike the cuſtoms of "this world, that I can ſcarce believe it "real: but yet I have read and heard of "ſuch exalted and diſintereſted generoſity, "and perhaps I may have now met with "it. May it be ſo!"

Her voice faultered as ſhe ſpoke. A chair happened fortunately to be near her, ſhe threw herſelf into it, and indulged the flood of tears that eaſed her labouring heart. Wills ſeated himſelf beſide her, and waited till the firſt pauſe in her diſtreſs and ſobbing, to ſpeak to her. "I aſſure "you I have no other motive than what I "told you: but your language and man-"ners ſo far above your appearance, and "the place you are in at this time in the "evening, aſtoniſh me. Forgive my in-"quiſitiveneſs, if I aſk you what is the "meaning of your tears? My curioſity is "laudable, and the whole intention of it "is to ſerve you."

"I cannot

"I cannot disbelieve it, Sir; and I will "give you an opportunity of exercising "your humanity. But," said she, rising, "I must hasten to my father, who is per-"haps perishing for want of food at this "very moment."

"Oh heavens!" said Wills, "but where "is he?"

"Confined in a loathsome jail; but, in-"deed, Sir, for no crime, except that of "being too tenacious of his own and his "unhappy daughter's honour."

"Then do not delay," replied Wills, "we'll hasten together to him."

"Alas, Sir, the sight would be too "shocking for you to support; I can "hardly bear it myself, though accustom-"ed and inured to misery."

They walked down the walk together. Assured of Wills's honest intentions, she supported herself by his arm as they proceeded. "But," said he, "if I cannot "see him to-night, I hope you will give

"me leave to call and ſee you both to-
"morrow morning. Where is he? and
"how ſhall I find him out?"

"His name is Belton, and he is con-
"fined in the Marſhalſea Priſon in the
"borough of Southwark."

"I do not know the place, but I ſhall
"eaſily find it: and you may be aſſured I
"will call there on you in the morning."

"Ah, Sir, replied Sophia Belton, "it
"is long ſince we have ſeen the appear-
"ance of a friend in our diſtreſſed ſituation:
"and tho' your goodneſs may induce you
"to come to us, yet it is ſo dreadful a
"place——"

"I regard not the appearance of any
"place, however frightful, where I can
"have an opportunity of ſerving merit or
"virtue in diſtreſs."

"Indeed, Sir, theſe are noble ſenti-
"ments; but you'll learn from my father
"how thoſe who profeſſed ſuch as theſe,
"have not adhered to them."

By

By this time they reached the ſtreet; and Wills, calling a coach, put her into it, and giving the coachman directions where to drive, paid him his fare, and and took leave of Sophia, aſſuring her he ſhould not fail to ſee her again in the morning.

He ſtrode homewards as faſt as he could, his mind filled with conjectures of what could be the cauſe of this young woman's diſtreſs, and with reflections on the ſcene he had gone through. At home he met the Captain in a *tete a tete* with his aunt, and though his heart and imagination were entirely occupied with what had paſſed, yet he knew their tempers too well to acquaint them with it. Mac Gregor ſeemed daily to increaſe in favour with his aunt, and treated him with reſpect, though he always took her part, and indeed echoed her words when the converſation ran on frugality, œconomy, or prudence.

Wills, anxious to know the bottom of this affair, roſe early in the morning, and his fear of breaking in upon Mr. Belton too abruptly, and ſooner than he was expected, only prevented his entering the priſon betimes: for he would rather have been guilty of an incivility to his ſuperior, than offend the tender ſenſibility of diſtreſs by any roughneſs in his behaviour; and that was always ſo affectionate, ſo open, and cordial, that miſery forgot her ſorrows when they were alleviated by him. He waited impatiently for the time that would authorize him to appear before Mr. Belton. At length it came; and he approached the entrance of that priſon, which, if thou haſt never been in, it will not be amiſs, gentle reader, to give thee a deſcription of, that thou mayeſt know, if you can form an adequate idea of it from our draught, in what a wretched place thoſe miſcreants are confined, who owe their fellow ſubjects and fellow creatures

the enormous ſum of forty ſhillings. It is our wiſh that thou mayeſt never enter it, except, as Wills did, incited by humanity and compaſſion.

As you quit the main ſtreet, a dirty court preſents itſelf to your view, which is terminated by large gates, cloſed with a maſſy bar of iron, faſtened with an enormous padlock. The top of the high wall over it is guarded by a *chevaux de frize*, to prevent the unhappy priſoners making their eſcape. By a narrow door, which you go up three ſteps to, on your right hand, and which is ſecured with a weighty chain and a large lock, you enter through a dirty room, which is the ſtation of the turnkey. The horrid clanking of the chain, or the dreadful ſound of the lock, is ſufficient to terrify you; but when you deſcend into the priſon, it is wretched almoſt beyond deſcription. Houſes, in which are apartments for the priſoners, with ſcarce a window, except in thoſe

whoſe inhabitants can afford to pay for them. Walls tottering to their fall. A ſmall encloſure, where thoſe who chuſe it may exerciſe themſelves with playing at ball, is in the middle of the area of the priſon; this is all the ſpot of earth allowed them to recreate themſelves in, if it can be called recreation. The ſight of this wretched place, but, above all, the appearance of the unhappy people who are confined, muſt afflict the hearts of thoſe who have the ſmalleſt ſpark of feeling. A ſet of miſerable creatures, meagre through want, ſqualid and pale with confinement, perhaps the objects of pique and malevolence, and impriſoned at the ſuit of ſome relentleſs creditor, whoſe overgrown fortune would not ſuffer a perceptible diminution from the loſs of five times the debt. There may be ſome, who, purſuing fraudulent methods, have drawn this heavy vengeance upon themſelves: but they are few in compariſon of the unfortunate; and

ſurely

ſurely the laws ſhould make ſome diſtinction between misfortune and guilt.

Wills, when he beheld this horrid ſcene, was affected ſo much, that he ſcarce knew how to go forward. He ſtared about him, wild with aſtoniſhment, and melted with pity. He pauſed ſome moments, before he could recollect himſelf ſufficiently to enquire after Mr. Belton: and he was ſoon put in the way of finding his room. When he knocked at the door, Sophia, who was taught to expect him, opened it; and he walked into a very ſmall room, which, by the aſſiduity of Sophy, was kept clean, tho' there was ſcarce any furniture in it, except two chairs, a little table, and a bed without curtains, in which lay an old man whoſe face ſeemed furrowed with the tears that had trickled down his eyes and cheeks. Wills's heart was ſo full that he could not ſpeak: he ſilently ſeated himſelf in the chair that Sophy had placed for him, while

ſhe ſat down on the bed-ſide by her father. "This is the gentleman," ſaid ſhe, "that "relieved me laſt night; this is he to whom "you are indebted for your life. Indeed," added ſhe, turning to him, "we had not "eat a bit for two days before. I was able "to get a little milk for my father, and "that was all the ſupport he had." Wills groaned: for his tongue was tied. He had never beheld ſuch a ſcene of diſtreſs, and it was beyond his conception how human nature could exiſt in it. "I do not "know, Sir," ſaid old Belton, in a faint voice, "to what motive to attribute the "honour of this viſit from you. If to your "humanity, and the deſire of aſſiſting the "wretched, and alleviating the woes of "the afflicted, it is truly praiſe-worthy, "and the reward of virtuous actions will "attend you for it: but, if you come here "with a view of inſulting my miſery, or "ſeducing that wretched girl, who has no

"other

"other portion but her innocence, I pray "you retire, and leave us to our fate. We "have been, for ſome time paſt, expecting "the welcome hand of death to relieve us "from this dreadful ſituation: a king of "terrors to others, but to us the beſt of "friends."

Wills, who could not bear to think that Mr. Belton ſhould ſuppoſe he had viſited them from ſuch deteſtable motives, firſt found his ſpeech, in vindication of himſelf. The old man ſeemed pleaſed with his warmth, and ſatisfied with his reaſons. "You will excuſe me," ſaid he, "Sir, for "ſpeaking thus to you. I have ſuffered "much from the villany of mankind. You "are a ſtranger to me, and a young man. "My poor girl here, before hunger and "want had withered the roſes in her "cheeks, and continual weeping had dim-"med the luſtre of her eyes, was a deſire-"able object: ſhe was more, ſhe was hand-

"ſome: ſhe was better, ſhe was virtuous "and good; the delight of her father's "heart, and the conſolation of his woes. "Her ſufferings have affected me more than "my own; and the dread of what will be-"come of her when I am dead, has given "me more pain, than the ſeparation of ſoul "and body would."

The poor girl's tears flowed apace: the big tear rolled down the venerable old man's face: and Wills did not, could not, refuſe to join them. "Sir, ſaid he, "I was moved "with your daughter's diſtreſs laſt night, "and I am come here this day to ſee if I "can be of any ſervice to you in ſettling "your affairs. Let me know if I can "ſerve you: and be aſſured, I will do it "to the utmoſt of my power."

"I believe," ſaid Mr. Belton, "your pro-"feſſions are ſincere: but, whether they are "or no, you can do me no injury now. I "am fallen below the reach of malevolence

"or

"or ingratitude. I will try to collect my "ſpirits ſufficiently to give you a detail of "my misfortunes, and trace the ſteps that "brought me here. It will be a good leſ- "ſon to you, Sir, who have yet numbered "but few years, to teach you, that you "may do infinite miſchief by letting your "paſſions get the better of juſtice and rea- "ſon. This is the leaſt I can do for you, "in return for your civility and good treat- "ment to that poor friendleſs girl laſt "night: ſhe was out without my know- "ledge.

Miſery is ſacred with me, Sir," ſaid Wills, interrupting him: "it is no merit in "me to treat it with reſpect. But, as you "are not perfectly recovered, and as it "may be too fatiguing to go through your "hiſtory without ſome refreſhment, will "you take it amiſs, if I beg the favour of "you to give me liberty to dine with you "to-day: I will juſt ſtep out, and order

"ſome-

"ſomething nouriſhing and proper for "you."

"I ſhall be obliged to you for your com-"pany; but Sophy knows better where to "order theſe things than you do."

"If ſhe will be ſo obliging as to ſhew "me the way, I will go with her."

They went out together, and he ſoon found a tavern, from whence he ordered ſome broth, and other things fit for a weak ſtomach. But previous to his going into the houſe, he ſlipped five guineas into Sophy's hand.

"You may be in want of ſome neceſſa-"ries. Nay, no apology or refuſal; I will "not hear of either: and when I think our "dinner will be nearly ready, I will wait "on you again. In the mean time, you "had better go to your father, and aſſiſt "him."

She obeyed him without heſitation; and in her way back ſhe was obliged to call at a neigh-

a neighbouring pawnbroker's to releaſe ſome apparel, without which her father could not appear before Wills. When the dinner was ready, he returned to Mr. Belton, whom he found up and dreſſed, ſitting on the ſide of his bed to receive him. He was clean; and had the appearance and demeanour of a man who had known better days. He endeavoured, weak as he was, to riſe when Wills came in: but this he prevented, by ſitting down on the bedſide by him. They converſed on different topics for a ſhort time, and he found Mr. Belton a man well acquainted with the world. He had alſo an opportunity of remarking Sophy; and ſaw that beauty her father had boaſted of, ſhed a faint luſtre over her features. Dinner coming in, put an end to their converſation. After this repaſt, Belton found himſelf much refreſhed; and, thinking Wills anxious to know the

the cauſe of his misfortunes, began his ſtory, as follows.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

The hiſtory of Mr. BELTON.

'I Am the ſon of a phyſician, whoſe 'learning, ſkill, and underſtanding, 'were ſufficient to have inſured him prac-'tice, had he been known: but, as for-'tune was not very favourable, he lan-'guiſhed in obſcurity; and though he 'lived decently and frugally, he found 'himſelf going backwards in the world. 'He gave me a ſchool education, which 'was all he could afford. He had, in 'his younger days, ſome intimacy with 'lord Cotſwold, with whom he had been 'at college. They had not ſeen each 'other for a long while: but my father, 'anxious to provide for me, or give me 'ſome opportunity of ſettling in life, de-

'termined

'termined to pay him a viſit, and apply 'to him for his intereſt. When he made 'himſelf known, his lordſhip embraced 'him, and aſſured him he would do every 'thing in his power to ſerve me; and de-'ſired my father to bring me to him. In 'a few days I accordingly went; and his 'lordſhip ſeemed well pleaſed with me, 'and my anſwers to the ſeveral queſtions 'he aſked me; and then propoſed to my 'father to take me into the houſe to be 'a companion to his ſon, who was young-'er than me. "He will have an oppor-"tunity of being better inſtructed here," 'ſaid his lordſhip, "and I will take care "of his future fortune." My father em-'braced the propoſal with joy; and in 'a ſhort time I repaired to his houſe.

'The young lord was as lovely in his 'perſon, as amiable in his manners: we 'ſoon grew very fond of each other, and 'purſued our appointed exerciſes with mu-'tual delight, as we were together. The

'time

'time came when we were to be ſeparated. 'He went to the univerſity, and thence to 'travel. His father placed me under the 'gentleman who was his agent. "I don't "mean that you ſhould make yourſelf an "attorney," ſaid his lordſhip to me. "It "is my deſign, that you ſhall ſupply the "place of my preſent agent whenever he "dies; and all the knowledge neceſſary "for you, is, to be acquainted with that "part of the buſineſs relative to the ma-"nagement of my eſtate. I am convinced "that you will be faithful and diligent, "from your attachment to me, which I "have no reaſon to doubt of." I aſſured 'him I ſhould never deceive his expecta-'tions.

'Soon after this my father died, and I 'became an entire dependant on his lord-'ſhip's family, for he left me nothing be-'ſide his bleſſing. My attention and dili-'gence, and the character the gentleman I 'was with gave his lordſhip of me, pleaſed

'him

'him exceedingly: He became a father to 'me in the room of him I had loſt; and 'at laſt, by the death of the agent, I was 'inveſted with that title; and lord Cotſ-'wold had the greateſt reaſon to be ſatis-'fied with my integrity and attention to 'his affairs.

'Soon after this, the young lord came 'home; his friendſhip was as great for me 'as ever; and he rejoiced at my ſituation, 'which would neceſſarily always make me 'near him. He aſſiſted at my marriage, 'and made my wife ſome very genteel pre-'ſents. He was very frequently at our 'houſe; and his profeſſions of friendſhip 'were unlimited, and I believed them ſin-'cere. His father died when he was about 'eighteen, and he became earl of Cotſwold. 'Our little Sophy was at that time two 'years old. I was confirmed in my em-'ployment, and my eyes were delighted 'with a proſpect of happineſs that they 'were not to poſſeſs. Fifteen years paſſed

'away

'away in uninterupted felicity. My little 'Sophy encreaſed in beauty; and her ac-'compliſhments were the joy of our hearts, 'for ſhe was the only one left us: we 'had three others, who died before they 'were acquainted with trouble. Lord 'Cotſwold had married a lady with a large 'fortune, and though ſhe was a very fine 'woman, they did not live happily toge-'ther. He would be very often, for a 'week together, at our houſe: It was 'more agreeable, he uſed to ſay, to him 'than his own; and frequently complain-'ed of his unhappy ſituation. My wife 'and daughter were the conſtant auditors 'of theſe complaints, and ever conſoled 'him in the beſt manner they could. He 'found comfort in their conſolation, and 'repeated his complaints. At this period 'my misfortunes firſt began: I became 'ſecurity for a man whom I thought honeſt, 'and who muſt have been inevitably ruin-'ed if I had not ſerved him; a man who

'was

'was indebted to me for many good offices.
'I was bound for four hundred pounds
'for him: he broke his faith with me, and
'fled. I became liable for the money,
'and I had it not in the world: for I had
'too much regard for my lord's intereſt,
'to think of enriching myſelf at his ex-
'pence. The perſons to whom the money
'was due came upon me, and I had but
'two hundred pounds of my own. In
'the midſt of the diſtreſs and confuſion
'cauſed by this accident, lord Cotſwold
'came to our houſe. The trouble and
'concern that was painted ſo viſibly on
'the countenances of the family alarmed
'him: he aſked what was the matter:
'with ſome difficulty they informed him.
"Let not that create you a moment's un-
"eaſineſs."—He called for pen and ink,
'and directly drew upon his banker for
'the ſum that was deficient. I was abroad
'during this tranſaction: and when I came
'home, they met me with joy and tranſ-
'port.

'port. I aſked the meaning of it. They 'ſhewed me the draft. "I am not ſur-"priſed at his lordſhip's generoſity," ſaid 'I to my wife. "We muſt live frugally till "we can make the ſum up again for him. "But where is his lordſhip, that I may re-"turn him my thanks?"

"He is gone away on purpoſe to avoid "them."

"I ſhall ſee him ſoon again, though."

'I did ſo, and paid him thoſe acknow-'ledgements he ſo well deſerved. I offered 'him a bond for the money. "No, no, "Belton," ſaid he, "only leave me a me-"morandum that ſuch a thing has hap-"pened."

'I gave him my note inſtantly, payable 'on demand.

"This will do," ſaid he, "very well; "though if you ſhould die, I ſhall never "take any notice of it, and I believe you "are pretty ſafe with it while you live."

'His

'His viſits to us were more frequent 'than heretofore. And ſeveral preſents he 'made Sophy, which were rich and valu- 'able, alarmed the prudence of the mo- 'ther, who began to perceive in his aſſi- 'duity to our daughter, ſomething more 'than friendſhip to the father. This 'ſhe communicated to me, and I deter- 'mined to watch his proceedings very 'narrowly, and, too ſoon for my peace, 'I found his eyes tell the ſecret of his 'heart. He uſed to gaze on the innocent 'Sophia, with the moſt ardent tranſport; 'not a glance, not a word, not a motion 'eſcaped him. Maſter of the ſoft arts of 'perſuaſion, he would lament his miſery, 'and blame his fate, that had placed him 'with a woman he could not love: he 'drew his own domeſtic troubles in ſuch 'ſtrong and ſtriking colours, that he forced 'tears from the eyes of my wife and 'daughter. He thought by melting her 'heart to pity, to inſpire it with love.

'But

'But while he proceeded in this manner 'there could be no objection made to him. 'And as yet he had gone no further. 'Sophy's charms began to expand, with 'all the ſweetneſs of the bluſhing roſe: 'His paſſion was wound up to the height; 'it was viſible in all his words, all his 'actions. We thought it neceſſary to cau- 'tion Sophia from taking any more pre- 'ſents from him. She obeyed us; and 'the next day ſhe had occaſion to put our 'injunction in practice. His lordſhip pre- 'ſented her with an eſclavage: it was an 'heart bound in diamond chains. The 'jewels were rich, and it was a noble pre- 'ſent. Sophia refuſed it. "Why, miſs "Belton, will you refuſe to accept this "trifle from my hands?"

"A trifle, my lord. You may think "it ſo, but I am ſure it is too coſtly for "me to wear, and does not ſuit my ſtation "in life: I muſt therefore beg leave to "decline accepting it."

"You

"You are fit for the moſt exalted ſta-
"tion," returned he, "and would do
"honour to it. Would to heaven you
"had been lady Cotſwold in the room of
"the preſent! I ſhould have been happy,
"inſtead of the miſerable wretch I am
"now. I beſeech you, my dear Sophy,
"to take this: I bought it on purpoſe for
"you."

'My wife, who was preſent at this con-
'verſation, interpoſed. She begged him
'to excuſe her daughter, who had already
'been diſtinguiſhed by ſeveral marks of
'his generoſity and bounty; and that it
'would afford an opportunity to the ma-
'licious to depreciate her character, which
'was all ſhe had to depend on, if ſhe ap-
'peared decked out in ſuch magnificent
'preſents. She therefore entreated him to
'ſpare her the mortification and grief of
'hearing her child traduced through his
'lordſhip's kindneſs.

"Oh," ſaid he, "you diſtreſs my heart, "by this refuſal: it is my greateſt happi- "neſs to ſee her charms decorated in the "moſt ſplendid manner, and her eyes out- "ſhine the diamonds."

"Oh, my lord, you ſhould not inſpire "the poor child with ſuch vain notions."

"They are the ſentiments of my heart," 'replied he; "I can no longer conceal "them. I burn, I languiſh for the charm- "ing Sophy. I adore her. My love "drinks up my blood, and deſtroys me. "The ſecret my breaſt has laboured with "for two years is now revealed, and I am "the moſt miſerable fellow this day exiſt- "ing, denied the poſſeſſion of her I love, "and confined to her I do not."

'He threw himſelf into an arm-chair 'in an extacy of paſſion; and covering his 'face with his hands, remained motionleſs 'and ſilent. Sophia took this opportuni- 'ty to retire. My wife remained with 'him.

'him. He recovered, and looking wildly 'about him—demanded where Sophy was.

"Retired to her chamber, my lord."

"And can't I ſee her? won't ſhe ſmile "upon me? I ſhall go mad if ſhe does "not. Oh! Mrs. Belton," throwing 'himſelf on his knees to my wife, and 'taking her hand, "have ſome pity on "me."

"Riſe, my lord; riſe, and compoſe "yourſelf. What can I do? what would "you have me do?"

"I know not," ſaid he: "I am diſtract-"ed."

'He ſaid no more, but hurried out of 'the houſe. This was the laſt ſtruggle 'his reaſon had with his paſſion; for, from 'that moment, he abandoned himſelf en-'tirely to the latter. I was then in the 'country, tranſacting his buſineſs. And 'when I came home, my wife did not fail 'to acquaint me with this affair. I fore-'ſaw the dreadful conſequences that would

'attend this paſſion, which he, ſo unhap-
'pily for us, conceived for my daughter.

'He came to our houſe as uſual, and,
'conſidering the obligations I was under to
'him, as he ſtill kept himſelf within
'bounds, I mentioned nothing to him of
'what my wife had told me. Sophy be-
'haved as before, in hopes that time and
'reflection would work a cure. But I was
'miſtaken, and only fed the flame by ſuf-
'fering her to be ſeen by him ſo often as
'ſhe was. One day he told me he wanted
'to ſpeak to me alone, and took me with
'him in his chariot to a tavern. We diſ-
'courſed about different things till after
'dinner; and when he had acquired a lit-
'tle courage from the wine, which he
'drank plentifully of, during his meal,
'he at laſt diſcloſed his guilty paſſion to
'me. "I adore her," ſaid he, "and
"cannot live without her. I will put my
"life in your hands. Conſent to my mar-
"rying her privately, I will give you any
"ſecurities

"ſecurities in my power, that I will leave
"her all the fortune I can when I die, in
"caſe that ſhould happen before my wife's
"deceaſe: and if ſhe ſhall die firſt, your
"daughter ſhall be my lawful wife."

'My blood grew cold at the propoſal.
"Oh, my lord," ſaid I, "let your reaſon
"and your honour get the better of your
"paſſion. What a dreadful thing do you
"propoſe! and to whom? a father that
"doats on his child with an extravagant
"fondneſs."

"Conſider," ſaid he, interrupting me,
"that you will promote her fortune be-
"yond your utmoſt wiſhes."

"But upon what terms, good my lord?
"Her fame, her character will be blaſted
"for ever: ſhe will be accounted your
"miſtreſs: I ſhall be held an infamous
"pandar, who have ſold the honour and
"eternal welfare of my daughter for gain;
"I ſhall be pointed at in the ſtreets: and

" you will bring ſhame and diſgrace on the
" heads of her unfortunate parents."

'To repeat all our converſation is im-
'poſſible. He wept, raved, ſwore, en-
'treated, offered bribes, and made uſe of
'menaces: they were all equally una-
'vailing. He only aſked leave to viſit her
'as uſual. I told him it would be im-
'poſſible to ſee her after what had paſſed:
'that I was the child of his and his father's
'bounty, who had made me what I was.
'That every thing I had in the world was
'at his command, except the honour of
'my wife and child, and my integrity.
'That I ſhould always regard him as my
'patron and benefactor, and, as ſuch,
'ſhould be truly rejoiced to ſee him at my
'houſe; but hoped that he would not
'be diſpleaſed if I prevented his ſeeing
'my daughter, for the ſight of her would
'only inflame his paſſion, and make him
'worſe.

" At

"At your peril, Belton," ſaid he, 'his 'eyes ſparkling with rage, and his whole 'frame agitated by fury; "at your peril "remove her."

"Her honour is dearer to me than my "life: ſhe muſt go where that can beſt "be protected."

'I haſtened from his preſence home-'ward; and, as we lived but at a ſmall 'diſtance from London, I repeated the 'converſation to my wife, and begged her 'to ſend Sophia to a friend's houſe, till 'this ſtorm was blown over. She obeyed: 'and I waited, with impatience, till I 'knew what effect her abſence would 'have upon him, and till I ſaw whether 'he would come near the houſe again. 'He returned the next morning. He 'came to me with a dejected countenance. "Well, Belton," ſaid he, "have you "been cruel enough to remove the object "of all my wiſhes from my ſight?"

"I have done, my Lord, as a father "ought to do, who regards his child."

"Then," ſaid he, ſtarting up, "per- "dition ſeize me, villain, but thou ſhalt "pay for this inſult!"

'I found remonſtrance would be vain, 'and therefore braved the ſtorm. "Be- "fore ſhe went, my Lord, ſhe deſired theſe "toys, with which you would have pur- "chaſed her honour and her happineſs, "to be delivered you."

"It is falſe, it is helliſh falſe. You "forced them from her: and thus I will "deſtroy them, as I will thee; but ſhe "has worn them, and they have acquired "a value by that; they have to me, at "leaſt, and I will keep them for her ſake "for ever."

'He gazed on them for a few moments. "As for you, Sir," ſaid he, "you muſt "reſign your employment: there is an- "other ready to take poſſeſſion of it."

"It

"It is well, my Lord; I wiſh he may "be as faithful to you as I have been."

'He made no anſwer, but went away.

'I immediately ſealed up the papers 'that concerned myſelf; left all his ac- 'counts, and every thing that related to 'his affairs, in proper order, and departed 'for London to ſee my dear girl. I met 'her, and acquainted her with this change 'in my fortune. She wept bitterly, and 'accuſed herſelf of being the cauſe of it. 'The next day, my poor wife came to me, 'and informed me, that the perſon whom 'Lord Cotſwold had put in my place, 'came to my houſe ſoon after I quitted it, 'and had ſeized all my goods for rent, 'and not left us any thing to call our own. 'This ſtroke affected me ſenſibly; for I 'ſaw my Lord was determined to deſtroy 'me, as he had threatened. It is true I 'owed him for many years rent; but he 'had made me a preſent of the houſe to

'live in, and I thought, he would not be 'ſo ungenerous. But I could not help my-'ſelf, and began to caſt about me to con-'trive how I ſhould ſupport myſelf and 'family: and going out that evening, 'when I was about ten or a dozen yards 'from my friend's houſe, a man tapped me 'on the ſhoulder, "Is not your name "Belton, Sir?"

"It is, Sir: what is your buſineſs with "me?"

"I have a writ againſt you, at the ſuit "of the noble Lord Cotſwold, for two "hundred pounds and the intereſt: you "muſt go along with me."

'I accordingly went to his houſe, and 'ſent to my poor wife and daughter an 'account of my ſituation. It is too af-'fecting for my ſpirits, almoſt exhauſted, 'to recollect their diſtreſs, or my own 'feelings. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that I have 'been confined here near three years at his 'Lordſhip's ſuit. In that time, my poor

'wife

"wife has ſunk under the weight of her "afflictions; and about a year ago ſhe died. "Happy for her that ſhe was removed to a "place of reſt, ere we had experienced the "moſt bitter and piercing wants. When "his Lordſhip thought that diſtreſs had "ſoftened my pride, he ſent one of his in-"famous agents to me. I ſoon learned the "purpoſe of his viſit, and diſmiſſed him in "ſuch a manner, that I believe he will "hardly venture here again. We have "tired out every friend we had in the world, "by repeated applications for aſſiſtance; "for the moſt friendly is wearied at laſt "with relieving the diſtreſſed; and, but "for your generoſity to my daughter, I "ſhould have been, ere this time, number-"ed with the dead. How ſhe came to "meet you, or for what purpoſe ſhe left "me, I know not.

"Ah, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "don't think of "it. I don't deſire to think of it myſelf,

"though it procured me the happineſs of "ſeeing this gentleman. Oh! could I ſit "by you, and ſee you expire for want?"

"Be comforted, young lady," replied Wills; "better days are yet in ſtore for "you. Pray, Sir, where does Lord Cotſ-"wold live?"

"In —— ſtreet—."

"Have you ever made any propoſals to "him ſince your confinement?"

"Never. There is but one that he will "accept of, and that is the only one I ne-"ver will make."

"But you don't know, my good Sir, "how his heart may be ſoftened. Perhaps "his paſſion may have changed its object. "Give me leave to go to him: I will not "fail to ſee him in the morning, and you "may get a releaſe from him on your own "terms."

"Take care, Sir, what you ſay to his "Lordſhip; for, ſhould you propoſe any "thing

" thing diſhonourable, I will never abide " by it."

Wills aſſured him he would regard his honour as much as his own: and Belton conſented that he ſhould go to Lord Cotſwold, and ſpeak to him on his behalf.

When they had ſettled theſe matters, Sophy prepared tea for them; and Wills became inquiſitive concerning the mode of living in the priſon.

" There are many real objects of com- " paſſion confined here," ſaid Belton, " and ſome who are not: but however " good or virtuous a man may be when " he comes into ſuch a place as this, yet, " from his being obliged ſometimes through " neceſſity to keep company with the moſt " iniquitous of mankind, who frequently " reſort to theſe places, he cannot entirely " eſcape the contagion. There are deeds " of villany ſet in motion in the moſt re-

" mote

"mote parts of the town and country, by
"ſprings which are concealed here: and
"a man, when once he is reduced to want,
"and hidden in a horrid priſon, has no re-
"gard to fame, or a good character: he
"imagines that he has nothing worſe to
"fear, and he thinks himſelf authorized
"to prey upon thoſe beings who have been
"the cauſe of his miſery. There are ſome
"here ſo baſe as even to take advantage
"of the diſtreſſes of their fellow priſoners.
"In ſhort, a priſon is but a ſchool for
"roguery: and a man will put in practice
"thoſe things when inforced by want and
"neceſſity, which he would have ſhudder-
"ed at the very thoughts of, if he had
"been at liberty, and had only a compe-
"tency."

"And what muſt that wretch feel, who
"has affluence, and yet has been the occa-
"ſion of all your miſeries? I won't fatigue
"you too much now, Mr. Belton: you

"may

"may depend upon ſeeing me to-morrow,
"and I hope I ſhall be able to bring you
"ſuch tidings, as will pleaſe you, and
"make you forget thoſe hours of miſery
"and anguiſh you have paſſed."

"Ah, Mr. Wills," ſaid Belton, "you
"are very ſanguine; but, I fear, that you
"will be diſagreeably repulſed."

"I'll venture it," ſaid he, and he took his leave of them.

CHAPTER XIX.

A converſation with a great man, which makes WILLS *act more fooliſhly than ever.*

WILLS's thoughts were not unemployed from the time he left Belton, till the hour it was proper for him to wait on Lord Cotſwold. He was conſidering in what manner he ſhould addreſs his lordſhip: whether in the pathetic ſtile to move his pity, or in a manner to convince his

his reaſon how unjuſtly he had acted. He was totally undetermined: and he let neceſſity ſupply the place of time and preparation, and to his lordſhip's houſe he went. The porter informed him his lordſhip was at home; and when he ſent up his name, though unknown, he was admitted into his lordſhip's apartment, who fortunately happened to be alone. He received him very politely, and invited him to partake of the breakfaſt that was juſt brought up. Wills declined it: upon which his lordſhip aſked what had occaſioned the honour of that viſit to him. "I come, my Lord, to ſo-"licit charity for a man, who, burdened "with years and misfortunes, ſinks under "his troubles, and relies upon your lord-"ſhip to relieve him."

"This is a ſtrange application to me, "Sir, from you, whom I have not the "pleaſure of knowing, and in favour of "one whom I am totally ignorant of. It

"may

"may be, Sir, that he does not deſerve the "exertion of my charity."

"I aſſure you, my Lord, he does, in- "finitely more than the mendicant who in- "terrupts your paſſage in the ſtreet, with, "perhaps, a feigned tale of diſtreſs: but "I know this to be real."

"But pray, Sir, favour me with his "name. Am I a ſtranger to him?"

"You are not by any means, my Lord. "His name is Belton."

"Belton," ſaid his lordſhip, ſtarting at the name; "and what have you to ſay "from him, Sir?"

"To ſay, my Lord, that the miſeries "he has undergone, are ſhocking to think "on, and too affecting for humanity to "relate. He lies confined in a horrid, "loathſome jail, that would daunt Deſpair "even to enter: his body conſumed by "ſickneſs and want, deprived of every "neceſſary of life: his lovely daughter too, "who ſuffers with her wretched father, is

"no

" no longer the object of desire; she is the
" child of woe and calamity; pale, ema-
" ciated, and lost to every comfort, she is
" carried away by the strong tide of trou-
" ble, which she cannot resist, to an early
" grave. Her mother, from the same
" cause, has trod that path already: there-
" fore, my Lord, to move your breast to
" compassion, I address you in their be-
" half: if you have conceived any pique
" against him, were you to see him, your
" revenge would be satisfied—Forgive him,
" and, by one noble act of generosity,
" cancel the remembrance of those ills he
" has suffered from you. It will also cause
" you to forget them yourself, my Lord,
" which will be productive of more hap-
" piness to you."

" And pray, Sir, who are you, that
" presume thus to lesson me?"

" One who, incited by the calls of hu-
" manity alone, has interested himself in
" his affairs, and who would do any thing

" to

"to assist and relieve him; and who wishes
"to awaken the same sensations in your
"lordship; for surely they are only dor-
"mant, they cannot be destroyed, nor can
"there be any heart so insensible, as not
"to be moved at their distresses."

"You mistake, Sir," replied his lord-ship, grinning, and taking a pinch of snuff, "mine is, I assure you. Pray do you "know that old rascal owes me two hun-"dred pounds besides the interest for five "years, and all the expences he has put "me to? Now, Sir, would you have me "make him a present of that sum? Be-"sides, it was money lent out of my "pocket."

"Certainly, my Lord, I would: nor "would I put two hundred pounds in "competition with any fellow-creature's "life: and if he dies, what will become "of his wretched daughter? Her life is "wrapped in his."

"No,

"No, no, ſhe won't die: we ſhall have "her among us then."

"Why, my Lord, *ſhe* would have paid "this debt once."

"She would ſo, but not now: I fancy "ſhe intends to offer herſelf to me to try, "but you may tell her it will not do."

"What! do you imagine I came as a "pandar, or a procurer for your in-"famous pleaſures, my Lord; or do I "look like a man who would bargain with "you for the ſale of that unfortunate girl's "innocence?"

"I do not know what you look like, "friend; but I know the buſineſs you came "about, looks very like what we call "pimping: however, if the girl will con-"ſent willingly and freely, I do not know "what I may be tempted to do. I aſſure "you, Sophy was a very charming, plump "little tit once, a nice bit."

"Your lordſhip's inſolence, which you "may term raillery, is what I have never "been

"been accuſtomed to; and did you not "owe your ſafety to your houſe, it is not "your rank that ſhould protect you from "my reſentment."

"Oh, then, you are her bully too, I "find: I did not think that ſhe had been "ſo bad as that."

"I'll tell you, my Lord," ſaid Wills, riſing, "I am an Engliſh gentleman, as "well entitled to good manners and civi- "lity as your lordſhip; and from what I "know of your character, infinitely more "tenacious of my honour, and am more "afraid of doing what's baſe and unjuſt "than you are; who, I am ſorry to ſay it, "are accuſtomed and inured to it. An- "other circumſtance, my Lord; I ſhall "neither forgive or forget theſe ſtrokes of "wit, and ſhall have an opportunity of "retorting them in a manner you will not "like, and in a place that you would not "chuſe to hear them again."

He

He went away, without taking any other leave of his lordſhip; who was not ſorry at his departure, as it relieved him from a very diſagreeable viſitor, who had told him, with a freedom he did not like, things he did not chuſe to hear.

Wills, who did not really expect ſuch treatment, was very much chagrined; eſpecially when he conſidered, that he muſt go back to the priſon with an account of this interview with Lord Cotſwold. To relate every diſagreeable thing that had been ſaid to him, would have been ſhocking; and how to conceal them he knew not, as it would be wrong not to acquaint them with the reception he had met.—He was at the gate of the priſon before he had come to any reſolution: however, as they were anxious, as he imagined, to learn the reſult of the conference, he went in. He found them impatient for his coming: hope had not quite forſaken them, or, at leaſt, had returned, ſince Wills's viſit.

viſit. They were both much refreſhed, and altered for the better, ſince the preceding day: but the concern that was viſible in Wills's face, cauſed an alteration in theirs. After ſatisfying his enquiries concerning their health, Belton could not refrain from aſking him, how he had ſucceeded with Lord Cotſwold, or whether he had ſeen him: "though I ſhould imagine, "from your looks, that you had ſeen him, "and had a very bad reception."

"You are but too true a prophet," replied Wills. "I have ſeen him, and he is "inexorable."

"Ah," ſaid Belton, "I feared it. His "heart knows not pity. I muſt ſuffer with "patience. I have learned to do ſo, but "'tis a very hard leſſon, Mr. Wills. Pray, "Sir, if you will indulge an old man's "curioſity, what did he ſay to you?"

Wills related their diſcourſe partially, for he concealed the moſt ſhocking parts of it. Belton remained ſilent when he had finiſhed;

finiſhed: and Sophia ſat diſſolved in tears. "Oh heaven!" ſaid ſhe, "that my father's "liberty can only be purchaſed by my "ruin!"

"Rather by my death," replied the father: "that will ſoon happen now, and "heaven will regard thy virtue and good-"neſs."

Wills endeavoured to inſpire them with hope, and drive theſe melancholy notions out of their heads: he conſoled and comforted them, and aſſured them better days were in ſtore.

Hope, though it be a flatterer, is very agreeable to the wretched; it often deceives them, but they truſt it ſtill. This was the caſe with poor Belton and his daughter: and though they had no certain reaſon, nor any probability of ſuppoſing their circumſtances would be better, yet they could not help thinking they would, becauſe Wills ſaid ſo. There is not ſo pleaſing a companion in the world

as

as he, who indulges us in talking of what we wiſh and like to hear. Wills, who deſired to make the change that was to happen to them, and which he had reſolved upon in his own breaſt, leſs ſudden and alarming than it would otherwiſe appear, continually talked of Belton's getting his liberty. This, though an impoſſibility to them, was very pleaſing; and they preſſed Wills to ſtay and partake of their little meal, which Sophy had prepared. He conſented willingly; and ate with an appetite that ſhewed them he was very well pleaſed with his dinner. He took his leave in the afternoon. "Well, Sir," ſaid Belton, "I hope you will come and ſee us "again. Though this is a terrible place "to come to, yet you won't think ſo much "of it by and by, when you are a little "uſed to it."

"I don't expect to ſee you long here."

Wills, when he left them, went into the firſt coffee-houſe he met, and calling for a

news-paper, ſoon ſaw an account of a number of people who informed the public they had money to lend on the ſhorteſt notice, and on the eaſieſt terms. He took down three or four of their names, and repaired to one of their offices. His ſecurity was unqueſtionable: but he thought the terms very hard. He went to others, and found them nearly in the ſame ſtory.—"Theſe rogues," ſaid he, "are neceſſary "to ſupply the wants of the diſtreſſed; but "they live upon the misfortunes and cala-"mities that befal others. Yet it is to "theſe I muſt have recourſe." He accordingly happened, very unfortunately for him, to employ a man whoſe appearance of candour, and profeſſions of honeſty, were very great, though his terms were not in the leaſt eaſier than any of the others. He wanted four hundred pounds. His eſtate was unincumbered; and in a few days the money was procured for him: but what with brokerage, premium, and

other

other expences, he received little more than three hundred and forty.

Poſſeſſed of this ſum, he haſtened to the attorney who had Belton's note. He ſaw him, and demanded if he was not Lord Cotſwold's attorney in that ſuit. He replied—He was.

"Have you got Mr. Belton's note?"

"Yes."

"Then I am come here to pay you "the money; and muſt have a diſcharge "from you, to clear him from priſon."

"Do you know," ſaid the worthy ſon of the law, ſtaring at him, "that it is "two hundred pounds, and five years in- "tereſt, that makes it two hundred and "fifty; and the coſts are, at leaſt, twen- "ty pounds more?"

"Make out your bill, Sir, and you "ſhall be paid."

"Pray, Sir, are you any relation of Mr. "Belton's?"

"No, Sir: but what buſineſs is that of "yours?"

"Why true, Sir, to be ſure; but my "Lord would like to know who it was that "paid the note; for he ſaid that Mr. Bel-"ton had no friends or relations, and was "taken by his father out of charity; and, "that he muſt ſtarve in priſon."

"That was very humane in his Lordſhip, "truly: but I ſhall not give him the ſatiſ-"faction to inform him who it was. How-"ever, Mr. Belton knows nothing of this "tranſaction."

"No indeed! that's ſomething aſtoniſh-"ing. Perhaps his daughter—"

"Hark you, Sir, be extremely cautious "what you ſay of that young lady: and "once more proceed, and finiſh your writ-"ing out the demand, for I ſhall tender "you the principal, intereſt, and coſts; "and if you refuſe it—"

"No, no, Sir, I don't intend it."

"But

"But my Lord muſt give a receipt in "full to Mr. Belton."

"There's no occaſion."

"But he will have it; and you ſhall give "me an accountable receipt for this money, "and alſo promiſe me a receipt, and ſuch "a one as I deſire."

"Well, Sir, you ſhall have it."

When Wills had got the diſcharge in his pocket, he haſtened to the ſcene of diſtreſs. He had, however, prepared them for his viſit, by ſending them a note in the morning, informing them, that he ſhould expect their company at dinner in a certain tavern he named. This was inexplicable to them: they were ſure there was ſomething extraordinary meant by it, for Wills was not accuſtomed to deceive them; but what that was they knew not. Wills, when he entered, gave the diſcharge to the goaler, paid his fees, and hurried to the room where they

were waiting his approach. "Well, Mr. "Belton," ſaid he, "did you receive my "note?"

"I did, Sir; but I know not what to "make of it."

"It is nothing but truth;" ſaid he. "I have procured your liberty for this day. "I have intereſt enough for that. Come, "there is a coach waiting at the door for "you: we will go and eat a comfortable "bit of dinner."

"I can hardly believe this to be real," ſaid Belton; "but I am ſure you would "not impoſe on me: therefore I will go "along with you willingly."

Sophy followed him in ſilence: and when ſhe ſaw her father on the outſide of the gate, where ſhe never expected to ſee him alive, the tear of joy trickled down her cheek. Wills handed them into a coach, and directed the driver to proceed to the place he intended to dine at, which

was

was a little way out of town. They kept a profound ſilence, the conſequence of aſtoniſhment on one part, till the old man cried out, "that he could not truſt his "ſenſes; and that there was ſome myſtery "in this, which could not be unravelled "without Mr. Wills's aſſiſtance." He aſſured him, he would not explain it till after dinner, and then they ſhould know every thing. "I ſhall be exceedingly im-"patient till that time comes," ſaid Belton.

After dinner was over, he took an opportunity of introducing the note, and convinced Belton that he was really at liberty. The joy of the father and daughter are not to be conceived. Wills was loaded with thanks and careſſes by the old man. Sophia's tears and ſilence ſpoke the ſenſibility of her heart. Not but ſhe would, had not her ſex's modeſty forbid it, have careſſed Wills as much as her father

ther did; for ſhe could not help feeling ſome tender emotions in his favour, who had rendered them ſo ſignal a ſervice. And if ever Wills looked handſome, it was at that moment, when, like heaven's miniſtering angel, he was reſtoring peace to the afflicted, health to the diſeaſed, and liberty to the priſoner. He would not repreſs thoſe acknowledgements which they were pouring forth; it would have been affectation. But he could not ſuffer them to indulge them too long, and therefore turned the diſcourſe into another channel, and the day was ſpent in happineſs and joy. When evening approached, he conducted them to a houſe where he had procured convenient and ſmall lodgings. He promiſed to viſit them next day, and left them to their repoſe, aſtoniſhed at the great change that had happened to them, and at a loſs how to account for it. The next morning he came according to his promiſe,

promiſe, and brought with him Lord Cotſwold's acquittance. Sophia's heart dilated with joy when ſhe ſaw him. And he could not help thinking her a moſt amiable girl; but ſhe did not affect his heart. Belton, who regarded him as a ſon, recovered his health ſurpriſingly, and entered into a conſultation with him, in what manner he ſhould contrive to ſupport himſelf and his daughter: many ſchemes were propoſed, but they were not feaſible. Wills had paid for their lodgings for a month. Belton had time to turn himſelf about. He propoſed writing to a diſtant relation of his, who had been left a conſiderable fortune in a diſtant county of England, and offering himſelf in the capacity of overſeer of her eſtate. That was approved of, and Wills dropped a letter as he went out, encloſing notes for thirty pounds, to ſupport them till they ſhould have an anſwer from the country;

try; and having reſtored them to liberty, he returned home very well ſatisfied. However, not before he had enjoined them, in the ſtrongeſt manner, not to ſay a ſyllable of the tranſaction to any body.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.

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VIII. NATURAL SHORT HAND; by Holdſworth and Aldridge of the Bank of England.

The following Character of this Book is taken from the Critical Review, Dec. 1770.

We have peruſed with pleaſure a Syſtem of Shorthand, compoſed by men of talents and learning, who ſeldom

ſeldom vouchſafe to engage in undertakings of this kind: though they are generally ill-executed by people of inferior endowments. We recommend this work to thoſe to whom it may be uſeful to reduce an accurate and expeditious ſhort-hand to practice; and to thoſe who are curious to examine ingenious and elegant novelty.

This learned and ingenious, yet comprehenſive and clear, Syſtem of Short-hand, evinces the propriety of its title. Thoſe who have hitherto digeſted plans of that uſeful art, like many writers on more important ſubjects, have paid greater attention to the ſchemes of their predeceſſors, than to nature and reaſon. But the authors of this excellent treatiſe, have rejected a ſervile regard to precedents—a merely mechanical improvement of the former arbitrary and unideal modes of abbreviating characters. The ſigns which they have invented to expreſs the ideas of the human mind, are as few and ſimple as the complication of their object would allow; and they will be impreſſed upon the memory of the learner, by their analogy to the uſe of our articulating organs, of which we have, in this book, an accurate and elegant explanation.